ISSN 0112 7719

CEREBUS

LATTER DAYS 31

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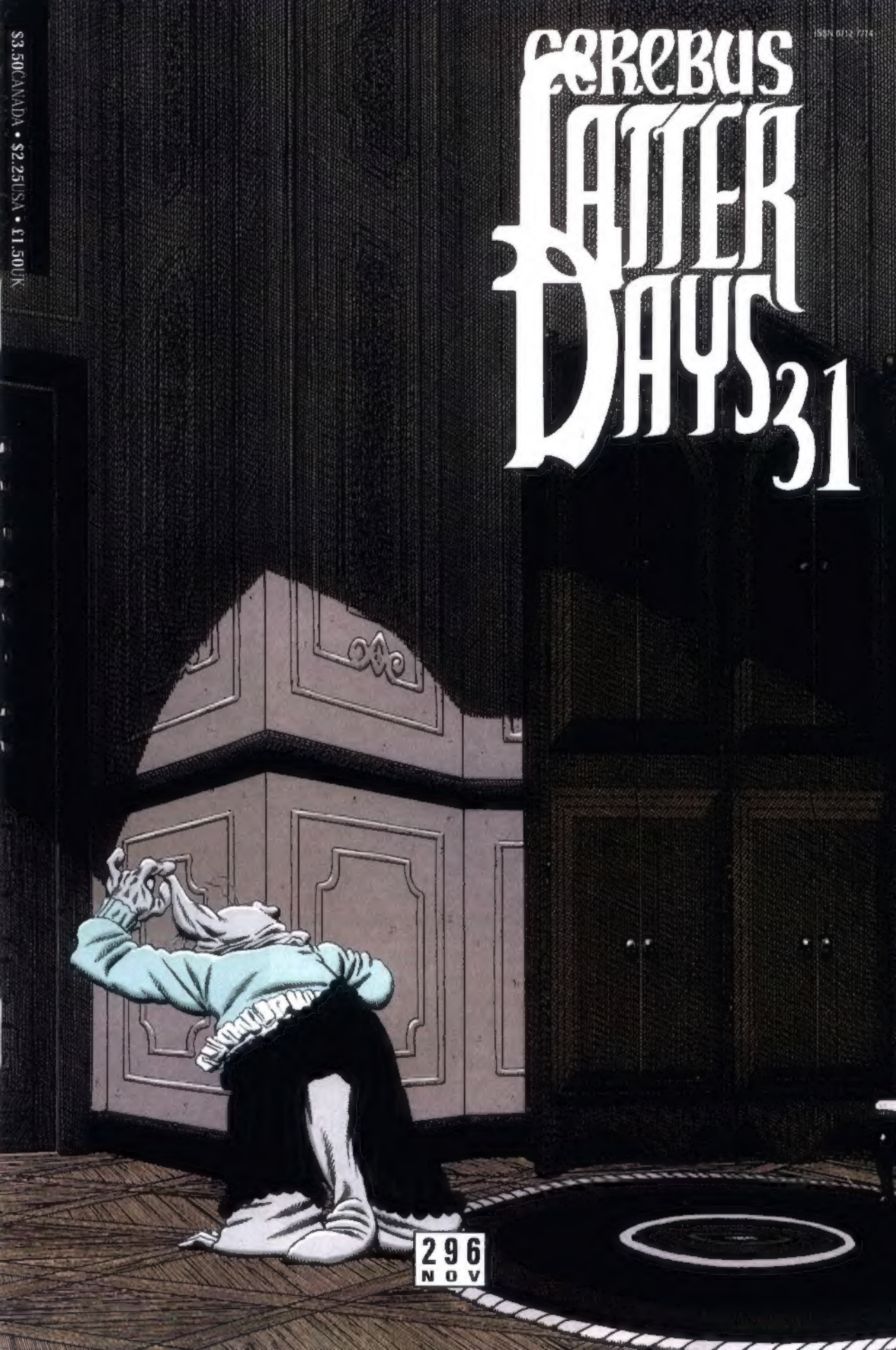


296
NOV

Endings IV

29 September. Today has been about the worst. The power went out in the house about seven a.m. in patterns that don't make sense (the space heater in the bathroom was unaffected, but the light in the bathroom is out, my mini-fridge was unaffected, but the light in the walk-in closet housing the mini-fridge was out. Inexplicably, the display lights for the pages on the wall of my studio, the tri-light in the library and the computer were unaffected). The upstairs lights flickered back on around 8 a.m. leaving only my residence/room, drawing board light and electric pencil sharpener without power. I changed the fuses for the affected areas, to no effect. It would be at least an hour and a half until any stores that sold extension cords were open. Thought briefly about dragging my drawing board over to a functional outlet and decided instead to fall over and go to sleep for two hours. As in combat (and finishing this book is as close to combat as I'll ever come), you sleep when you have the chance because there's no telling when you'll have the chance again. The last three weeks I have had an average of one one-hour nap per day—some days none, some days two. This seems to be a repercussion of having pushed my twelve-hour days into thirteen- and fourteen- hour days. It is harder to believe, by the day, that I used to comfortably do two pages a day or at least a page-and-a-half a day and still stay up until midnight or 1 a.m. drinking and socializing. Harlan Ellison called to get some extra copies of 289/290 and asked when I was coming for a visit. I told him I wasn't going anywhere until the book was done. He laughed and said, "You aren't leaving Canada until the book is done?" I didn't have the heart to tell him I haven't been out of a *four-block radius of the studio* since SPACE back in April.

Back here with the extension cords by 10 a.m. The bluelines for issue 295 arrive before I can actually start on my page, so I have to sit down and proofread the issue. Phoned Preney and told them to go ahead and ship the issue. Then remembered, Oh, right these are bluelines. Told them to go ahead and *print* the issue. Forgot to mention to them that the *Latter Days* cover proof that came in is too light and they should boost the cyan and the magenta. Dreading the *Latter Days* bluelines where I'll have to go through a five-hundred page book and fifty pages of annotations and somehow still get a page lettered and drawn that day.

The worst thing is that we can't make any headway on the Christmas deadline. Six pages a week is just "par" golf. Page 20 of issue 300 is all typesetting and page 19 is pretty basic lettering, so I've been holding those in reserve as "cheat" pages to make up my six-page-a-week quota. Had to use page 20 last week and two fourteen-hour days on "no lettering pages" (lettering is taking about twice as long as drawing for some reason) to buy myself the two days I needed to rough in the last two-and-a-half issues backwards (that is, 298, 299 and 300) to reassure myself that everything was going to fit. *Is* going to fit. I still have to finish typing this inside front cover before I go back down and finish page 10 of issue 297. Then I have to finish my last substantial portion of part three of the "Getting *Riel*" dialogue. Chet has made it clear that he isn't going to rearrange his life around "Getting *Riel*" so I'll probably have to do most of part three myself.

The good news is that 294 definitely arrived in some stores in the cover-dated month of September. Issue 295 (the bluelines I approved) should (God willing) hit in October and 296 (which Ger should be bringing in the last two pages for) in November. So, at this point, it's "our game to lose" on numbers 297, 298, 299 and 300.

Dave's Estimated Date of Completion: December 17 (five-page week the week before last)

Ger's Estimated Date of Completion: December 23 (four-page week last week—five-page week with the aforementioned page 20 of issue 300)

CEREBUS
NO. 296 NOVEMBER 2003

DAVE SIM
Creator, Writer
Characters
(interior art & cover)
pencil & ink,
mechanical tones,
lettering

GERHARD
Background Artist
Cover Artist
pencil & ink
Cover Technician

LATTER DAYS

•

PROLOGUE
(Cerebus 266
and 267)

•

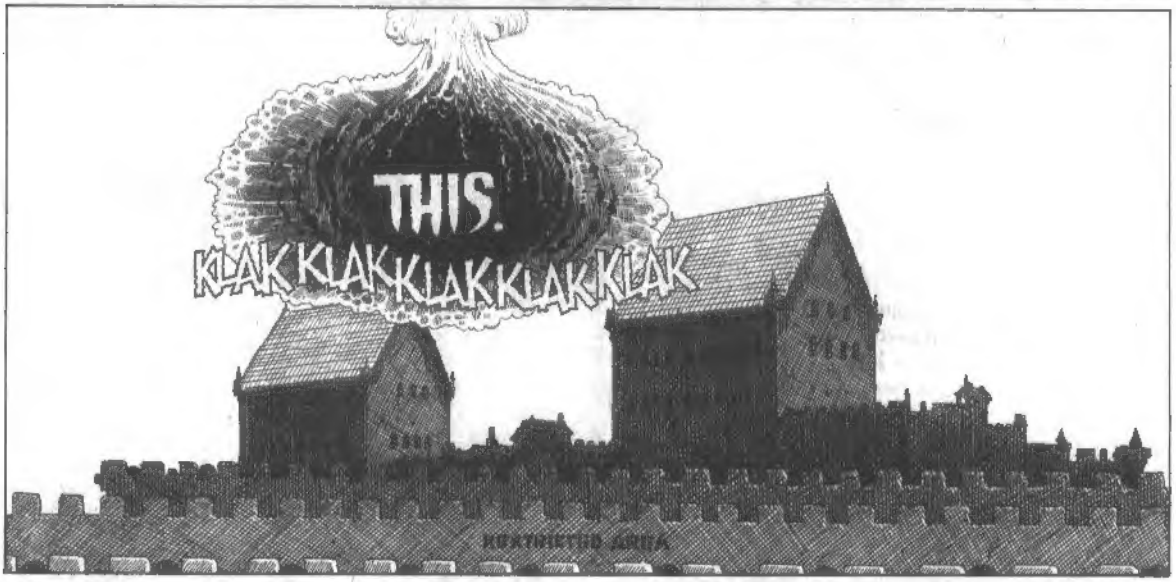
BOOK ONE
(Cerebus 268 to
288)

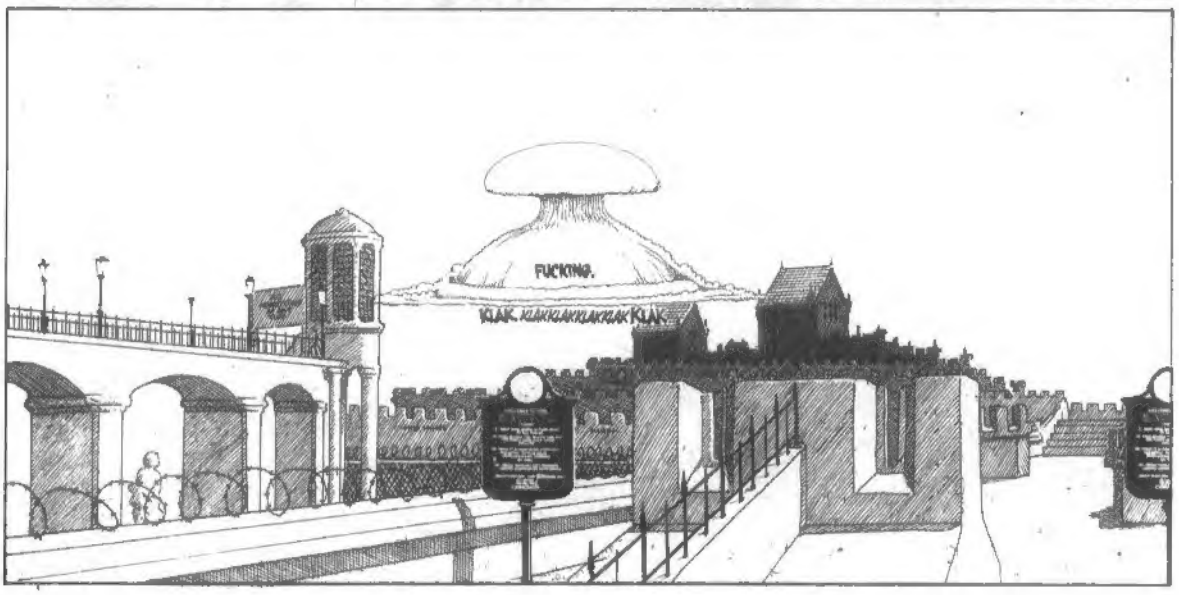
•

BOOK TWO
(Cerebus 289 to
300)

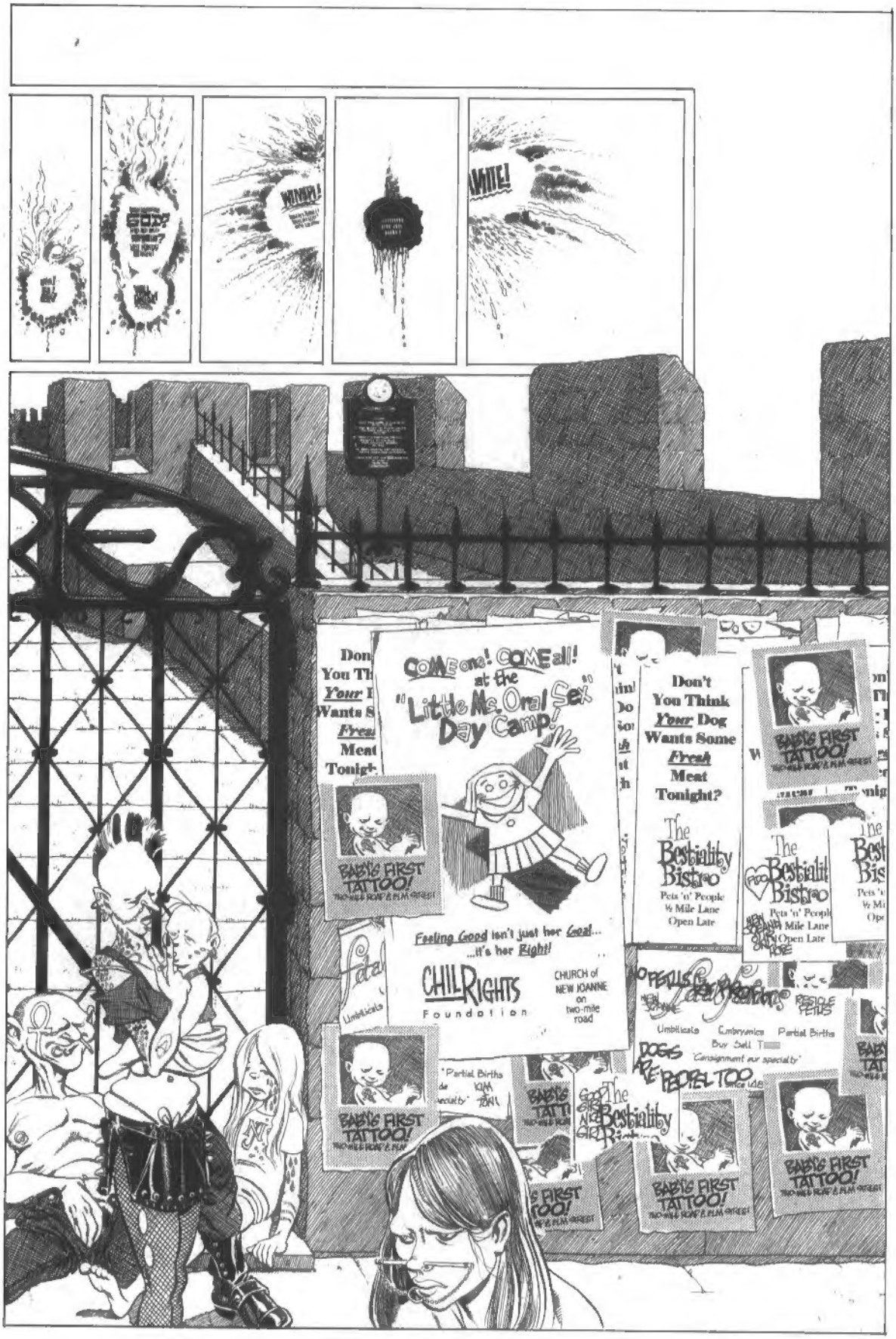
PUBLISHED MONTHLY BY
ASTRYARK/VANAHEIM INC.
P.O. BOX 1674, STATION C
KITCHENER, ON N2G 4R2
ALL CONTENTS ©2003
DAVE SIM AND GERHARD
PRINTED IN CANADA BY
PRENEY PRINT & LITHO INC.
WINDSOR, ONTARIO

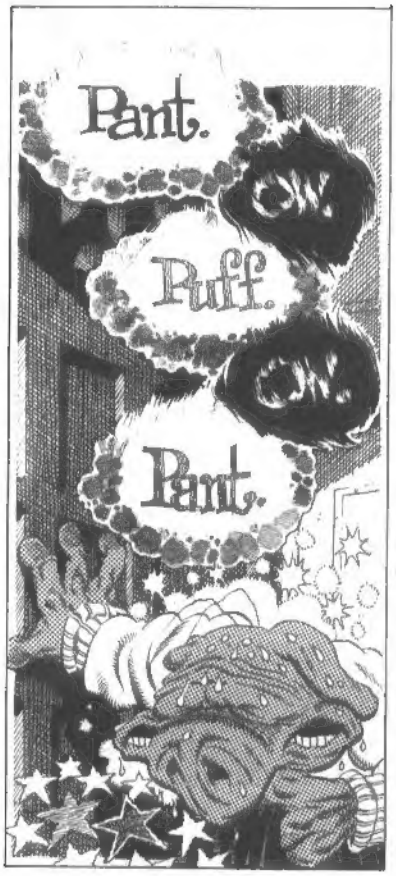
KLAKLAKLAK
OPEN. KLAK
KLAK KLAK KLAK
KLAK


THIS.
KLAK KLAK KLAK KLAK KLAK
RESTRICTED AREA


FUCKING.
KLAK. KLAKKLAKKLAKKLAK KLAK

DOOR!
KLAK KLAK KLAK KLAK KLAK KLAK KLAK KLAK
Don't You Think Your Dog Wants Some Fresh Meat Tonight?
CLOSED FOR THE DURATION OF THE
BABY'S FIRST TATTOO!
CHURCH of NEW JOANNE on two-mile road
CHILRIGHTS Foundation
CHURCH of NEW JOANNE on two-mile road
NEW JOANNE
BEDOPPHE BEEF


WHAM!
WHITE!
COME one! COME all! at the "Little Ms. Oral Sex" Day Camp!
Don't You Think Your Dog Wants Some Fresh Meat Tonight?
The Bestiality Bistro
Pets 'n' People
½ Mile Lane
Open Late
BABY'S FIRST TATTOO!
Feeling Good isn't just her Goal... ...it's her Right!
CHILD RIGHTS Foundation
CHURCH of NEW JOANNE on two-mile road
Umbilicals
Embryonics
Partial Births
DOGS ARE PEOPLE TOO
'Consignment our specialty'


Pant.
Puff.
Pant.

IF YOU'RE ALL DONE YELLING AT ME, SIR, I THINK I MAY HAVE COME UP WITH A COMPROMISE THAT WILL GET THE uhm.."FOO-FOO." TO LIFT HIS VETO.
Pant.

AYE?
WHAT?

WELL, SIR... AS IT TURNS OUT, THE uhm.."FOO-FOO".. AND I WENT TO BOARDING SCHOOL TOGETHER

CRINK

WELL, I MEAN.. NOT TOGETHER, SIR I MEANT.. WE WERE.. THAT IS.. HE LIVED IN THE SAME WING OF THE STUDENT DORMITORIES AS I DID
LIMP
Limp

SIR, IT WASN'T THAT KIND OF BOARDING SCHOOL.

WELL... PARTS OF IT WERE SURE.

THE GLEE CLUB CLOAKROOM FOR INSTANCE WAS AN ABSOLUTE CESS-PIT OF &%!

LIMP Limp

THAT IS, I HEARD THAT THE GLEE CLUB CLOAKROOM WAS AN ABSOLUTE CESS-PIT OF DEPRAVITY.

STRANGE THE THINGS YOU REMEMBER FROM YOUR SCHOOL DAYS, ISN'T IT, SIR?

LIMP Limp

LIKE&%! LIKE THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN IGNEOUS, SEDIMENTARY AND METAMORPHIC ROCKS

HA HA. I CAN'T THINK OF ANYTHING LESS USEFUL FOR A CHIEF OF SECURITY TO REMEMBER

UNLESS IT'S THE GLEE CLUB CLOAK &%! THAT IS WHAT HE HEARD &%! ER. WHAT I HEARD &%!

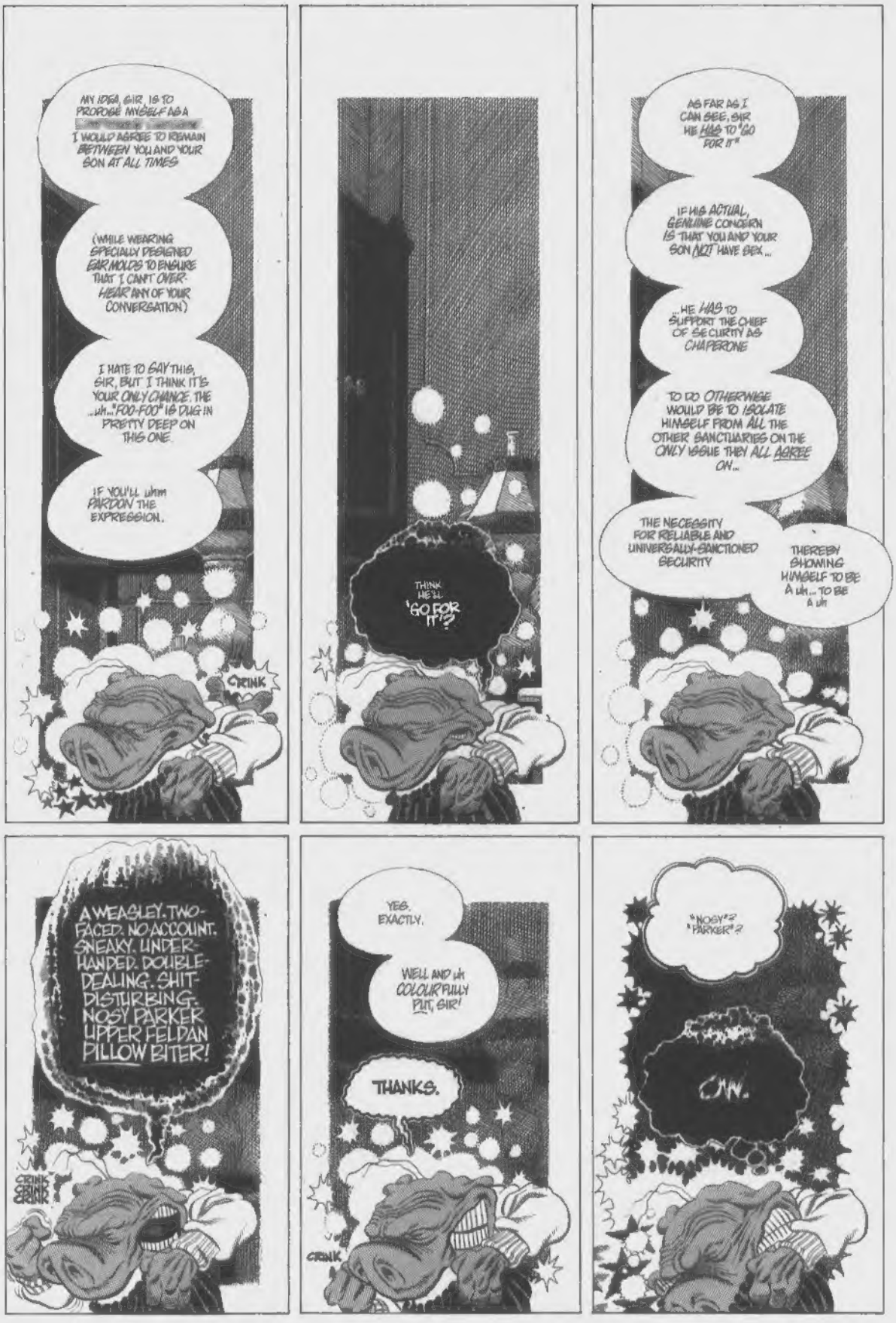
WHAT I--FOR SOME REASON-- REMEMBER HEARING

LIMP Limp

SIR, DO YOU WANT TO HEAR MY SUGGESTION FOR A COMPROMISE OR NOT?

HANH?!

OH. OH AYE. GO AHEAD.


MY IDEA, SIR, IS TO PROPOSE MYSELF AS A [redacted]
I WOULD AGREE TO REMAIN BETWEEN YOU AND YOUR SON AT ALL TIMES
(WHILE WEARING SPECIALLY DESIGNED EAR MOLDS TO ENSURE THAT I CAN'T OVER-HEAR ANY OF YOUR CONVERSATION)
I HATE TO SAY THIS, SIR, BUT I THINK IT'S YOUR ONLY CHANCE. THE ...uh..."FOO-FOO" IS DUG IN PRETTY DEEP ON THIS ONE.
IF YOU'LL uhmm PARDON THE EXPRESSION.
CRINK
THINK HE'LL 'GO FOR IT'?
AS FAR AS I CAN SEE, SIR HE HAS TO 'GO FOR IT"
IF HIS ACTUAL, GENUINE CONCERN IS THAT YOU AND YOUR SON NOT HAVE SEX...
...HE HAS TO SUPPORT THE CHIEF OF SECURITY AS CHAPERONE
TO DO OTHERWISE WOULD BE TO ISOLATE HIMSELF FROM ALL THE OTHER SANCTUARIES ON THE ONLY ISSUE THEY ALL AGREE ON...
THE NECESSITY FOR RELIABLE AND UNIVERSALLY-SANCTIONED SECURITY
THEREBY SHOWING HIMSELF TO BE A uh... TO BE A uh
A WEASLEY. TWO-FACED. NO ACCOUNT. SNEAKY. UNDER-HANDED. DOUBLE-DEALING. SHIT-DISTURBING. NOSY PARKER UPPER FELDAN PILLOW BITER!
CRINK CRINK CRINK
YEES, EXACTLY.
WELL AND uh COLOURFULLY PUT, SIR!
THANKS.
CRINK
"NOSY"? "PARKER"?
CHN.

NGGH

ER- IS ANYTHING WRONG, SIR?

SOUNDS SO... FAR AWAY.

NAY. CERBERUS WAS JUST...

STRETCHING.

VERY GOOD, SIR. SO- I HAVE YOUR AUTHORIZATION TO PROPOSE MYSELF AS A COMPROMISE CHAPERONE?

EH? OH. AYE. AYE.

VERY GOOD, SIR. I'LL STOP BY MY APARTMENTS TO PICK UP MY EAR MOLDS, GET THE uhm "FOO-FOO" TO "SIGN OFF" ON THE COMPROMISE AND

SDD WILLING

I'LL BE BACK HERE WITH YOUR SON WITH IN THE HOUR.

OW! THIS IS THE WORST HEARTBURN CERBERUS HAS EVER HAD

FORGET THE HEARTBURN! DIDN'T CERBERUS HEAR WHAT O'TRILLY JUST SAID? HE'S GOING TO BE BACK WITH SHEP! SHEP WITHIN THE HOUR!

CERBERUS NEEDS A PLAN!

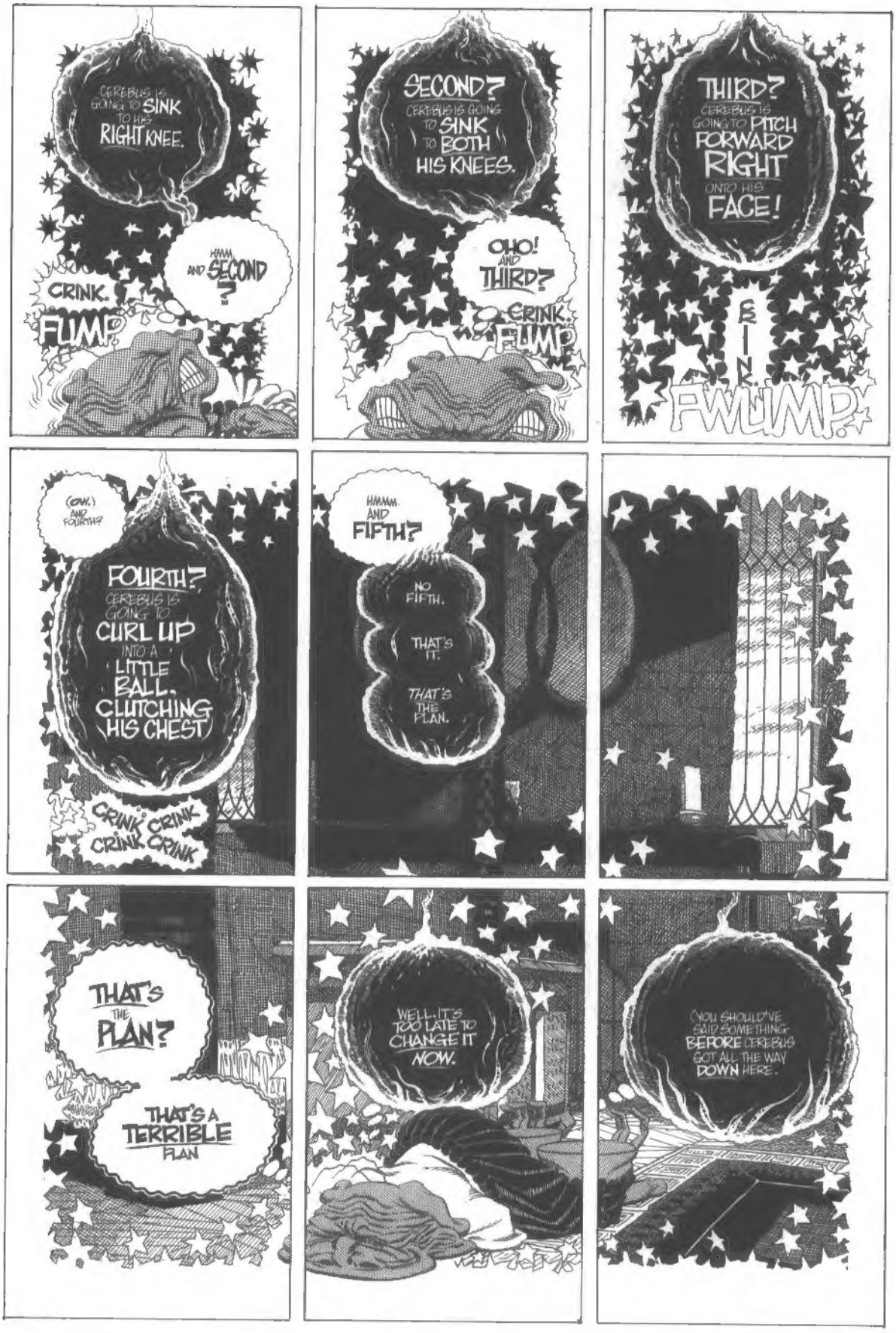
A PLAN.

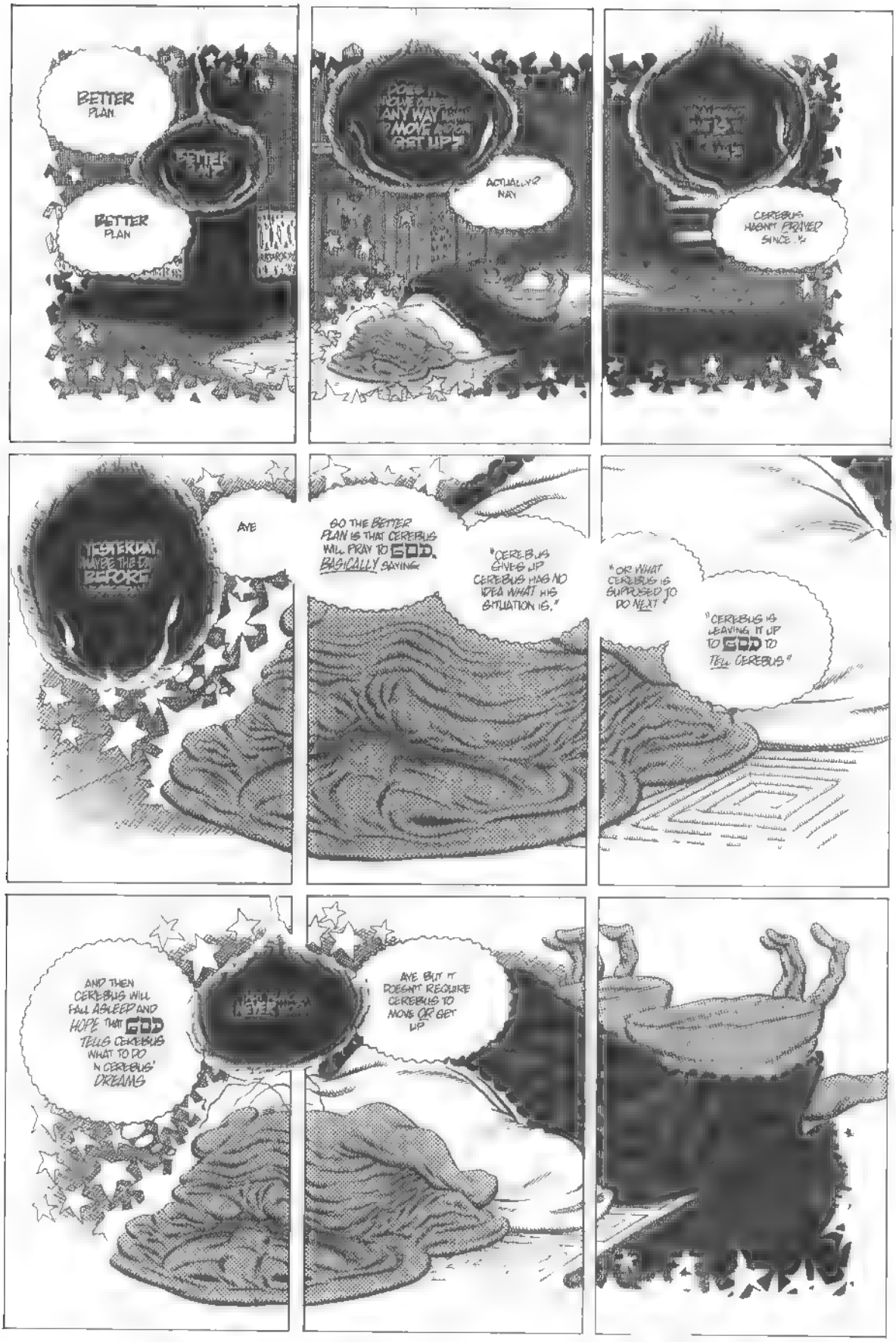
AYE!

HMM. A PLAN. WAIT A MINUTE. CERBERUS HAS THE PERFECT PLAN.

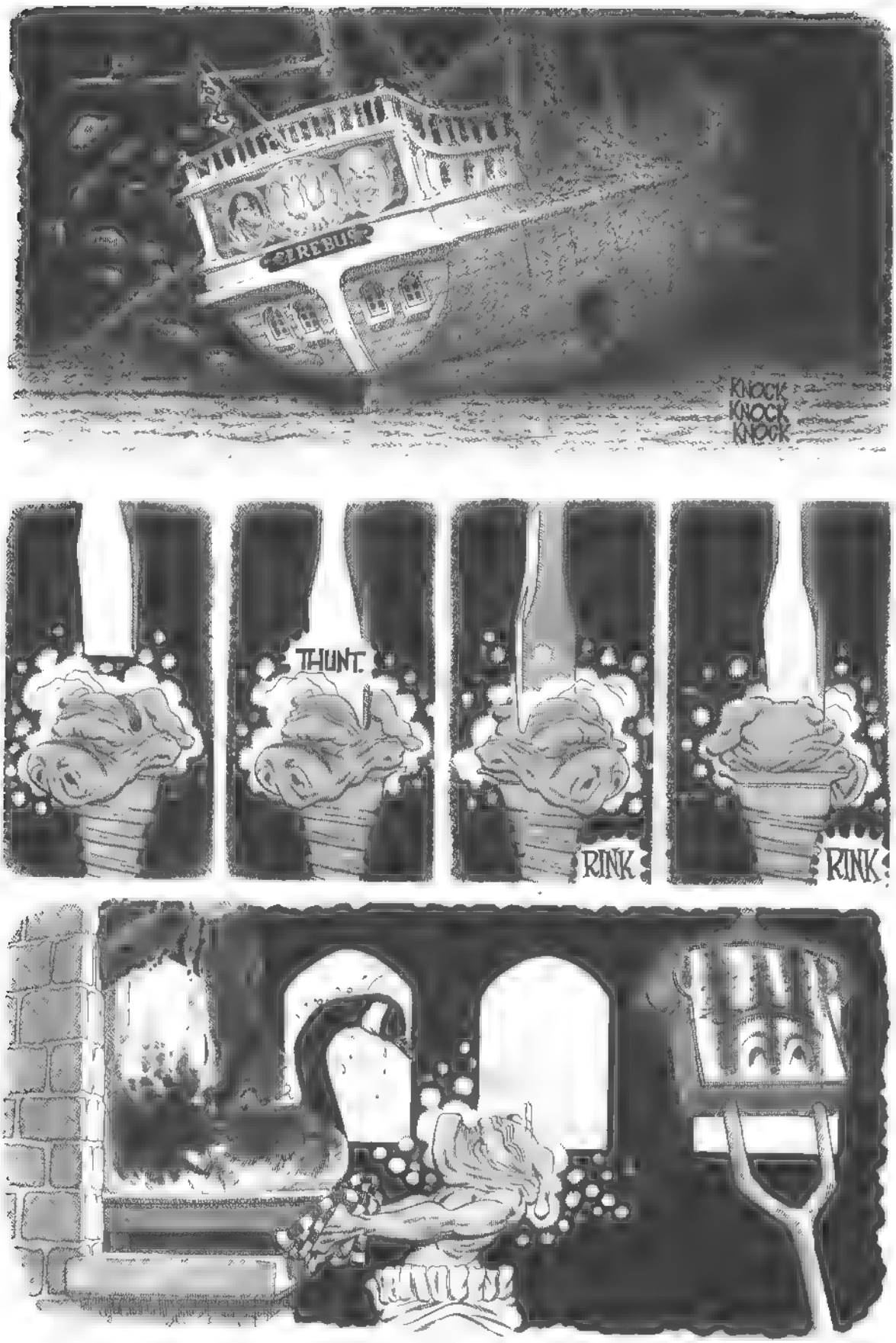
WHAT'S THAT?

FIRST?


CEREBUS IS GOING TO SINK TO HIS RIGHT KNEE.
HMM. AND SECOND?
CRINK.
FLUMP
SECOND? CEREBUS IS GOING TO SINK TO BOTH HIS KNEES.
OHO! AND THIRD?
CRINK. FLUMP
THIRD? CEREBUS IS GOING TO PITCH FORWARD RIGHT ONTO HIS FACE!
ERK.
FWUMP.
(OW.) AND FOURTH?
FOURTH? CEREBUS IS GOING TO CURL UP INTO A LITTLE BALL, CLUTCHING HIS CHEST
CRINK CRINK CRINK CRINK
HMMM. AND FIFTH?
NO FIFTH.
THAT'S IT.
THAT'S THE PLAN.
THAT'S THE PLAN?
THAT'S A TERRIBLE PLAN
WELL, IT'S TOO LATE TO CHANGE IT NOW.
(YOU SHOULD'VE SAID SOMETHING BEFORE CEREBUS GOT ALL THE WAY DOWN HERE.


BETTER PLAN
BETTER PLAN
BETTER PLAN
DOES HE HAVE ANY WAY TO MOVE AGAIN OR GET UP?
ACTUALLY? NAY
CEREBUS HASN'T PRAYED SINCE ?
YESTERDAY, MAYBE THE DAY BEFORE?
AYE
SO THE BETTER PLAN IS THAT CEREBUS WILL PRAY TO GOD, BASICALLY SAYING
"CEREBUS GIVES UP CEREBUS HAS NO IDEA WHAT HIS SITUATION IS."
"OR WHAT CEREBUS IS SUPPOSED TO DO NEXT"
"CEREBUS IS LEAVING IT UP TO GOD TO TELL CEREBUS"
AND THEN CEREBUS WILL FALL ASLEEP AND HOPE THAT GOD TELLS CEREBUS WHAT TO DO IN CEREBUS' DREAMS
NEVER?
AYE, BUT IT DOESN'T REQUIRE CEREBUS TO MOVE OR GET UP

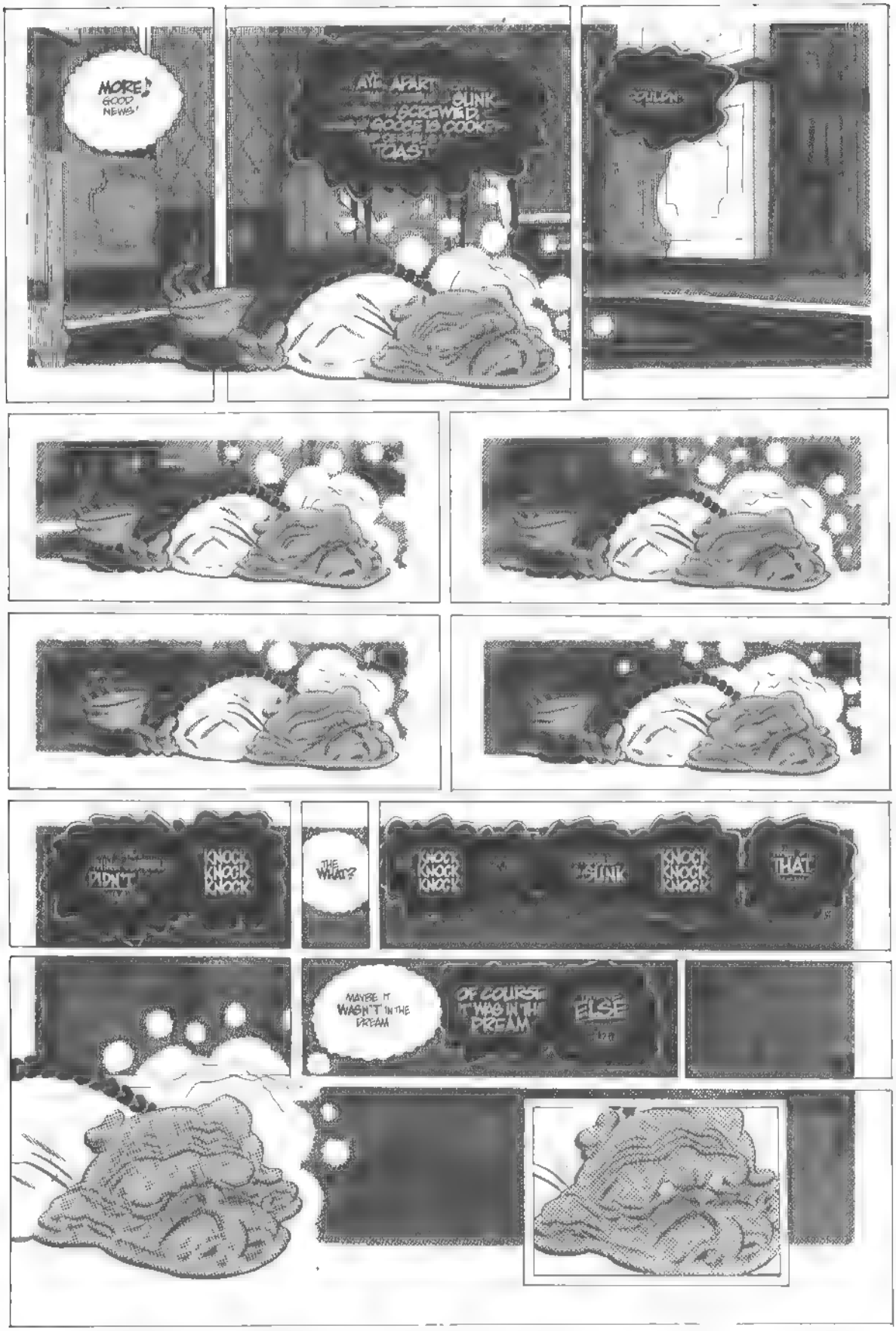
In the Name of
GOD, The Most Gracious,
The Most Merciful, One GOD, having One
Name: One Face and One Aspect, which is
GOD. Glory to GOD in the Highest; Glory to
GOD Most High
GOD, Who Created All the Worlds and All
the Heavens. GOD, Who is the Only Source
of Salvation. GOD, Who is the Only Hope of
Redemption. GOD, Who is the Only Good. GOD,
Who is my Only Sanctuary. GOD, Who is my
Only Safe Harbour from the Storm.
Glory to GOD in the Highest; Glory to
GOD Most High.
THANKS

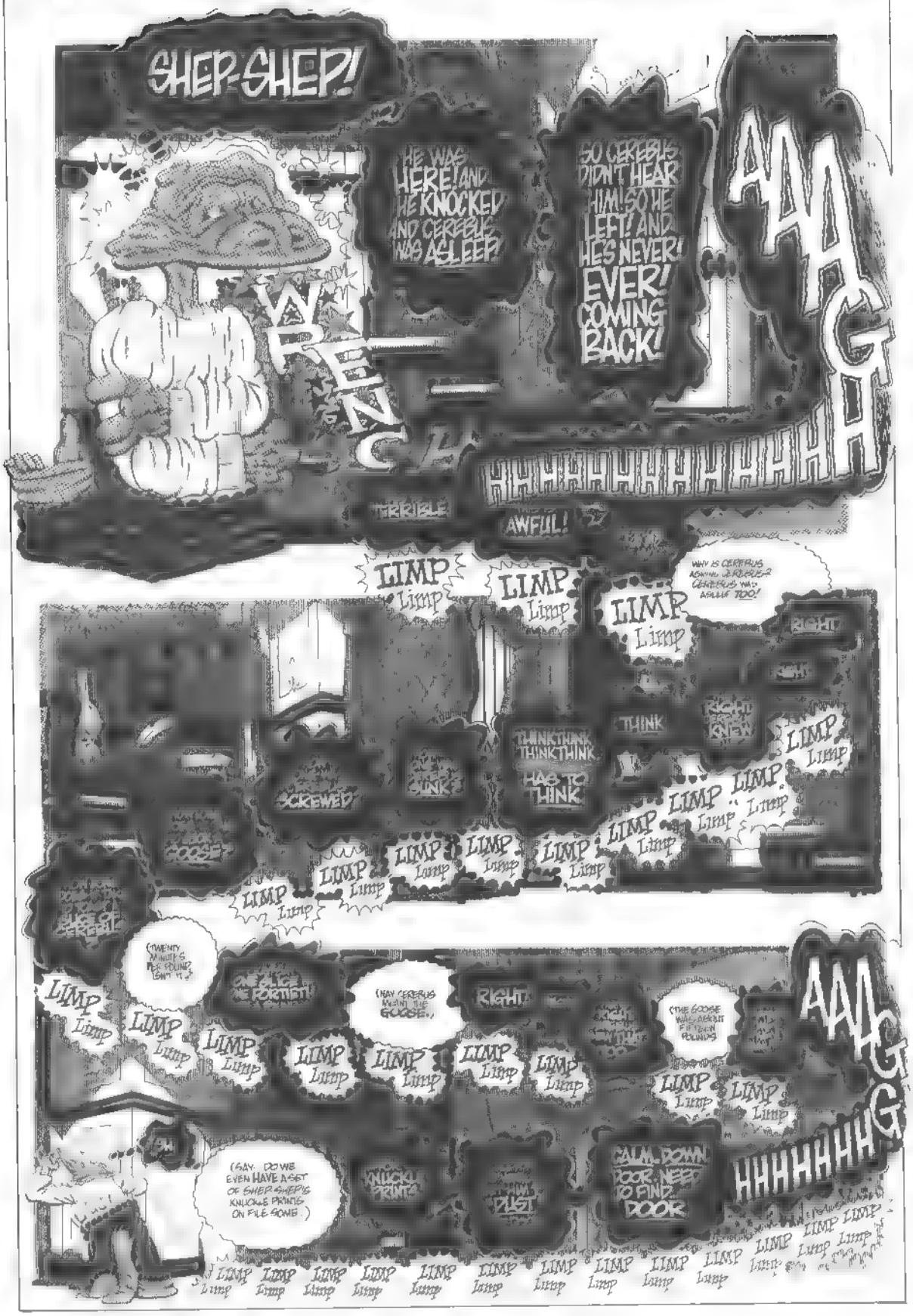

REBUS
KNOCK
KNOCK
KNOCK
THUNT
RINK
RINK

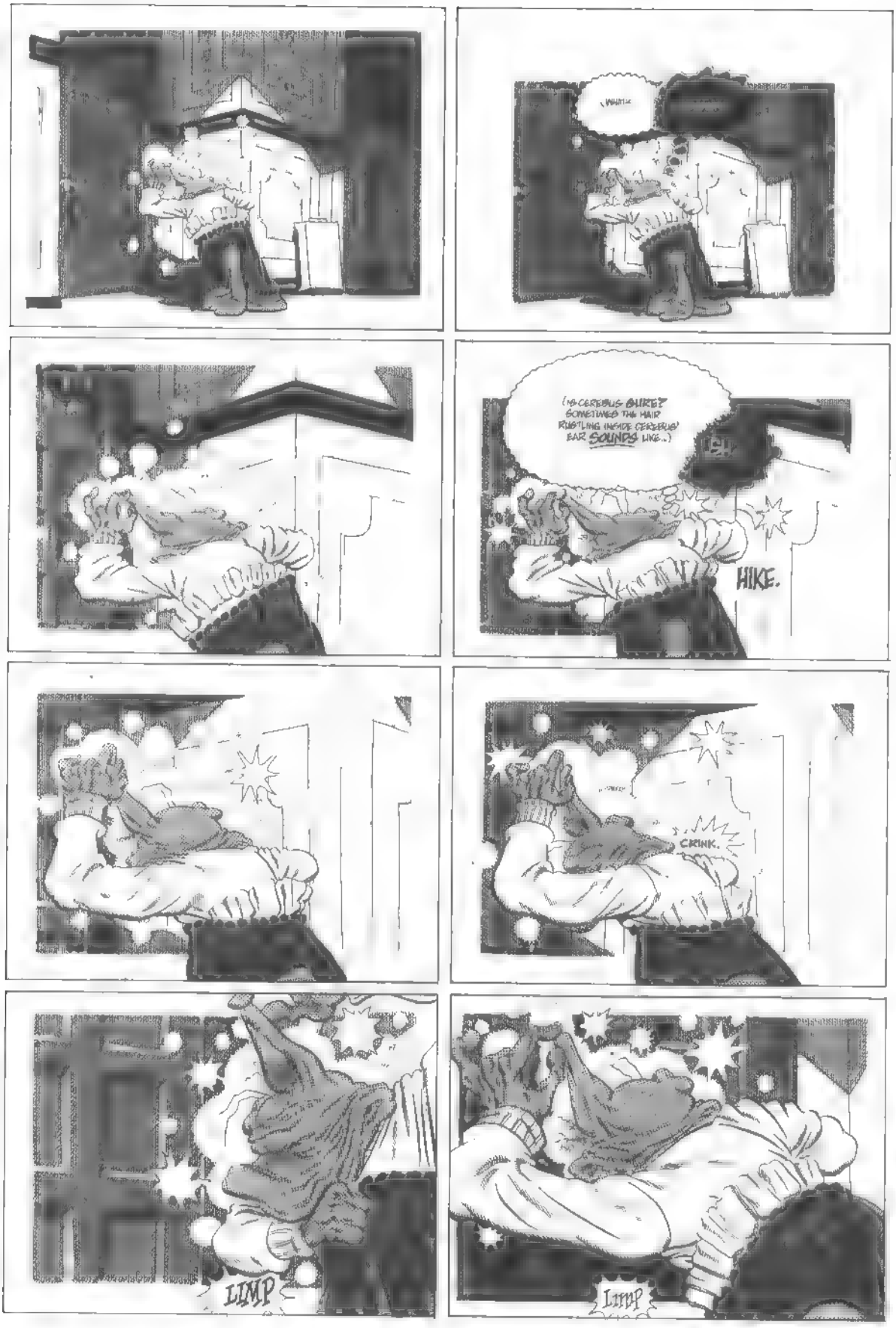
WAIT WAIT WAIT
GUESS
SUNK!
DING!
CEREBUS
CEREBUS
"CEREBUS IS SCREWED!"
DING!
CEREBUS
HINT
("CEREBUS'
("APOSTROPHE")

CEREBUS
CEREBUS
CEREBUS
OH, WAIT! CEREBUS HAS GOT IT
"CEREBUS GOOSE IS COOKED! DING
AND?
AND?
OH! AND
"CEREBUS IS TOAST! DING

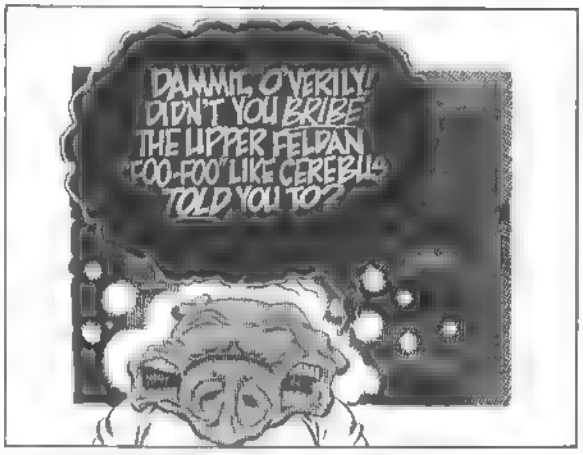
WELL ...
WELL ... UH..
LOOKING ON THE BRIGHT SIDE IT WAS VERY NICE OF GOD TO TAKE TIME OUT OF HIS BUSY SCHEDULE TO ANSWER CEREBUS QUESTION


MORE! GOOD NEWS!
A/C APART
SCREWED
GOOSE IS COOKED
TOAST
GUNK
GLUNK
KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK
DIDN'T
THE WHAT?
KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK
GUNK
KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK
THAT
MAYBE IT WASN'T IN THE DREAM
OF COURSE IT WAS IN TH' DREAM
ELSE


SHEP-SHEP!
HE WAS HERE! AND HE KNOCKED AND CERBERUS WAS ASLEEP!
SO CERBERUS DIDN'T HEAR HIM! SO HE LEFT! AND HE'S NEVER! EVER! COMING BACK!
AAAG
WRENCH
TERRIBLE
AWFUL!
AHHHHHHHHHHHHHH
LIMP
Limp
WHY IS CERBERUS ASKING IF CERBERUS WAS ASLEEP TOO?
RIGHT
THINK
RIGHT! BECAUSE I KNEW
THINKTHINK THINKTHINK
HAS TO THINK
SCREWED
SUNK!
GOOSE!
TWENTY MINUTES PER POUND, ISN'T IT?
ONE POUND ONE FORTIETH!
(WAY CERBERUS WANT THE GOOSE.)
RIGHT
(THE GOOSE WAS ABOUT FIFTEEN POUNDS)
AAAG
HHHHHHHG
(SAY. DO WE EVEN HAVE A SET OF SHEP-SHEP'S KNUCKLE PRINTS ON FILE SOME.)
KNUCKLE PRINTS
FILE!
CALM. DOWN. DOOR. NEED TO FIND DOOR


(HEARTBEAT)
(HEARTBEAT)
(HEARTBEAT)

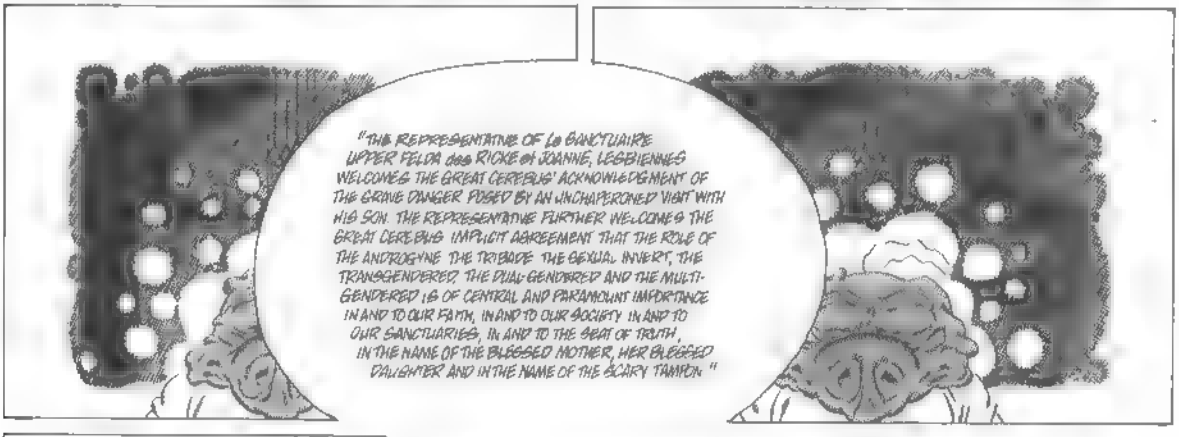
SIR?
SORRY DID I WAKE YOU?
I'M UH
TONG
I'M AFRAID I KNOCKED BEFORE I HEARD YOU SNORING
FLUMP
SHEP. SHEP?
HE'S ...?
HE'S ...?
UH
I'M AFRAID NOT SIR
SLUMP
FLUMP
FLUMP

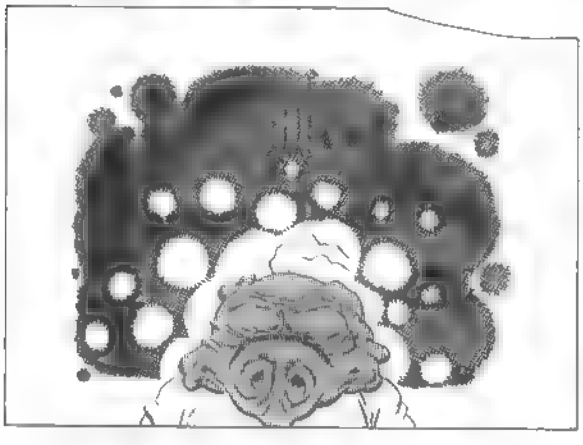

DAMMIT, O'VERILY! DIDN'T YOU BRIBE THE UPPER FELDAN "FOO-FOO" LIKE CEREBUS TOLD YOU TO?

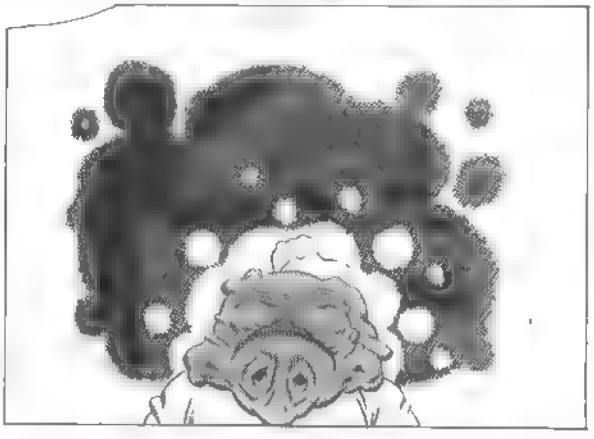
ER THAT WAS LAST TIME, SIR THIS TIME YOU TOLD ME TO OFFER HIM A COMPROMISE

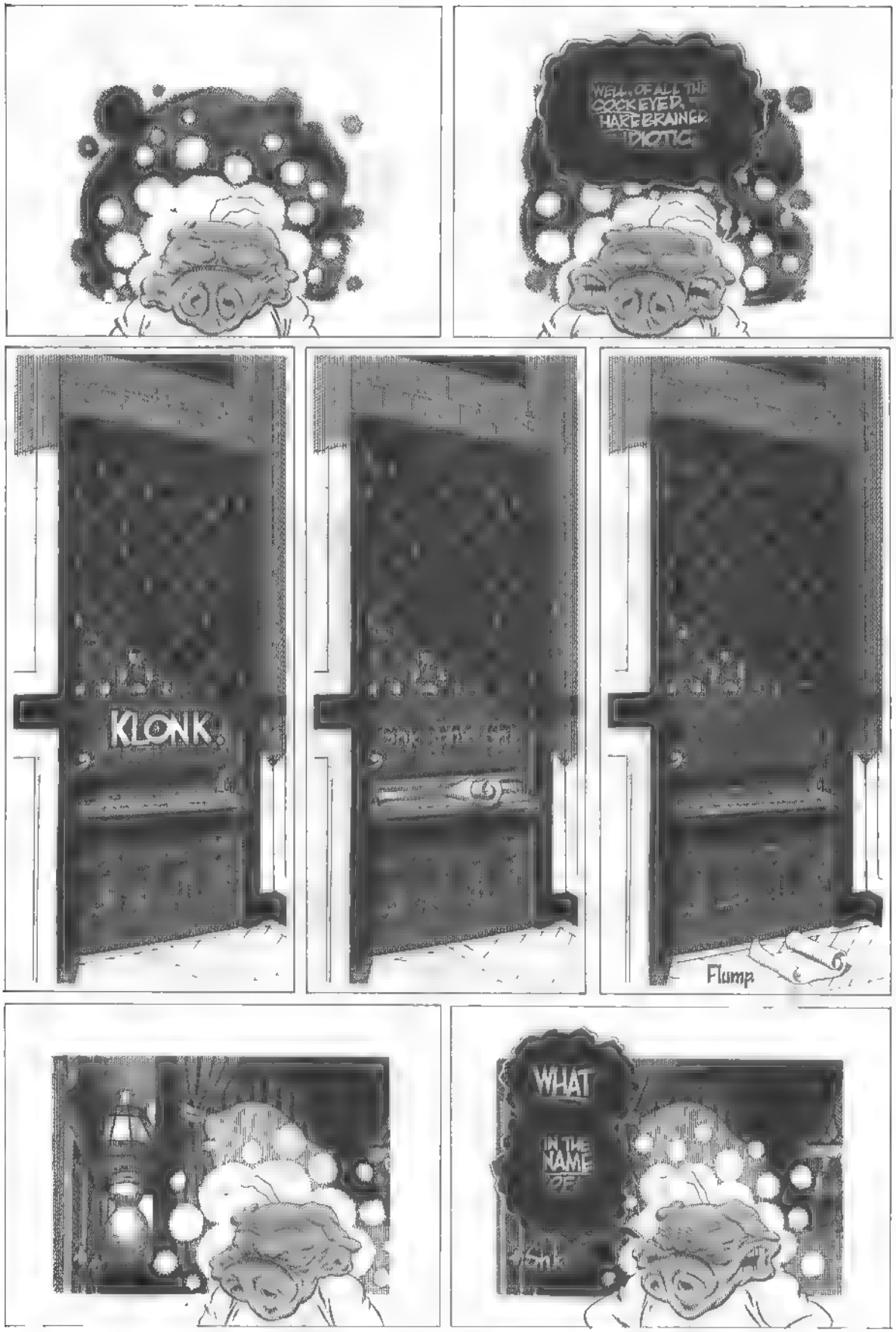
DAMMIT, O'VERITY! DIDN'T YOU OFFER THE UPPER FELDAN "FOO-FOO" A COMPROMISE LIKE CEREBUS TOLD YOU TO?

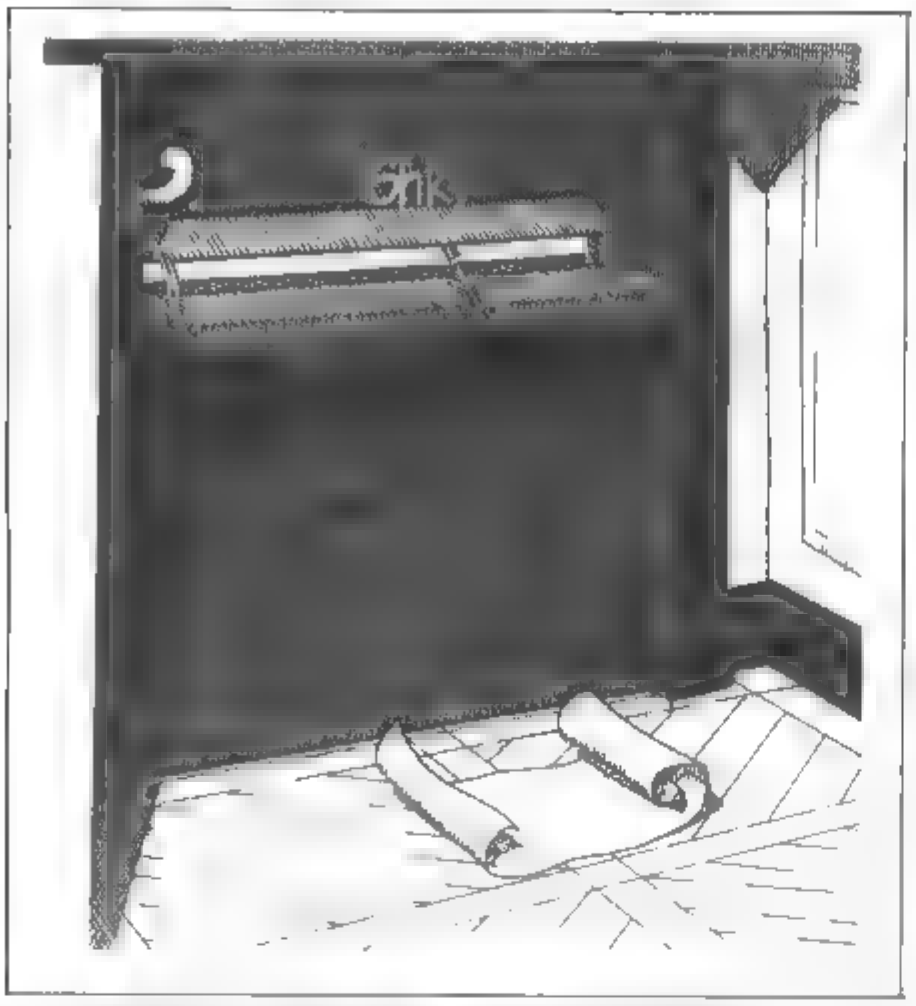
YES, SIR AND HE'S AGREED BUT HE'S ALSO ISSUED A- WHAT STATEMENT
STATEMENT?! WHAT SORT OF STATEMENT?

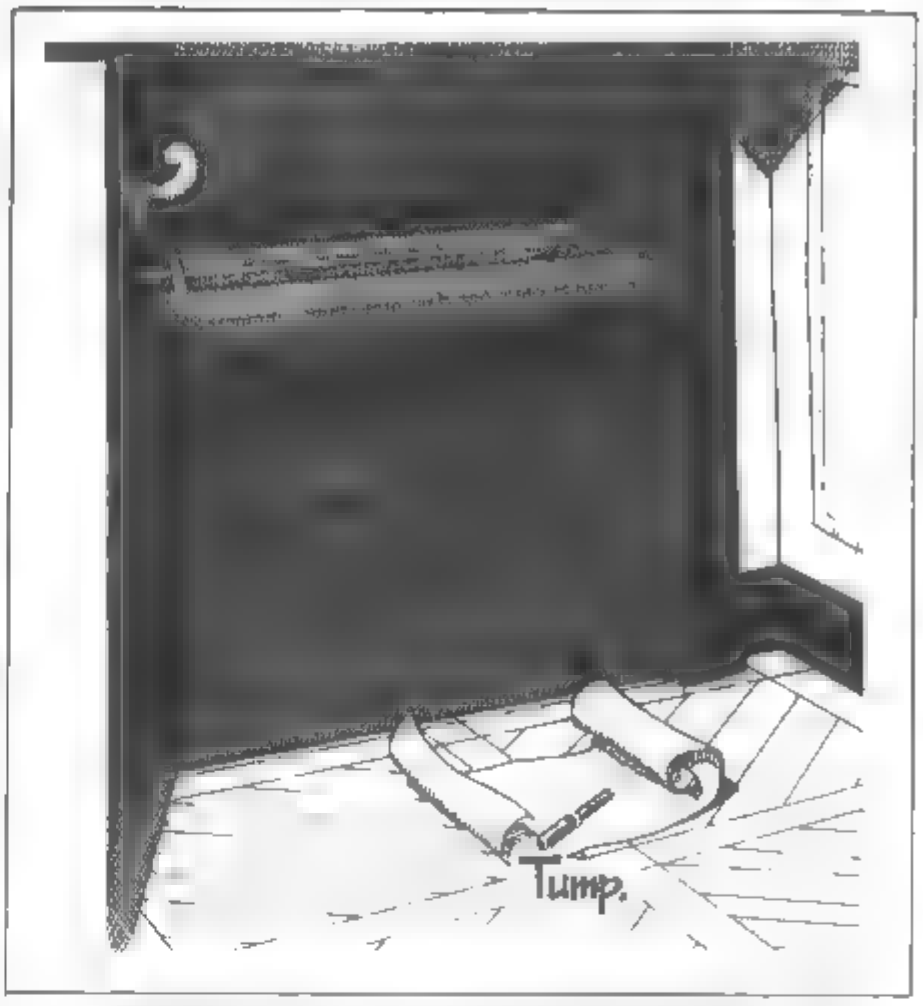

"THE REPRESENTATIVE OF Le SANCTUAIRE UPPER FELDA does RICKE et JOANNE, LESBIENNES WELCOMES THE GREAT CEREBUS' ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF THE GRAVE DANGER POSED BY AN UNCHAPERONED VISIT WITH HIS SON. THE REPRESENTATIVE FURTHER WELCOMES THE GREAT CEREBUS IMPLICIT AGREEMENT THAT THE ROLE OF THE ANDROGYNE THE TRIBODE THE SEXUAL INVERT, THE TRANSGENDERED, THE DUAL GENDERED AND THE MULTI-GENDERED IS OF CENTRAL AND PARAMOUNT IMPORTANCE IN AND TO OUR FAITH, IN AND TO OUR SOCIETY IN AND TO OUR SANCTUARIES, IN AND TO THE SEAT OF TRUTH, IN THE NAME OF THE BLESSED MOTHER, HER BLESSED DAUGHTER AND IN THE NAME OF THE SCARY TAMPON."

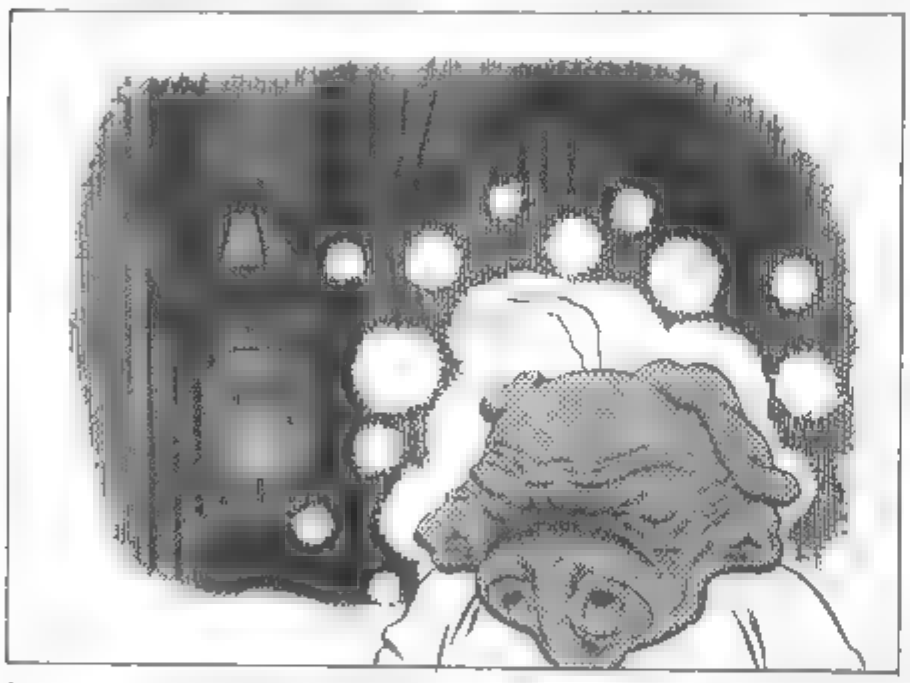


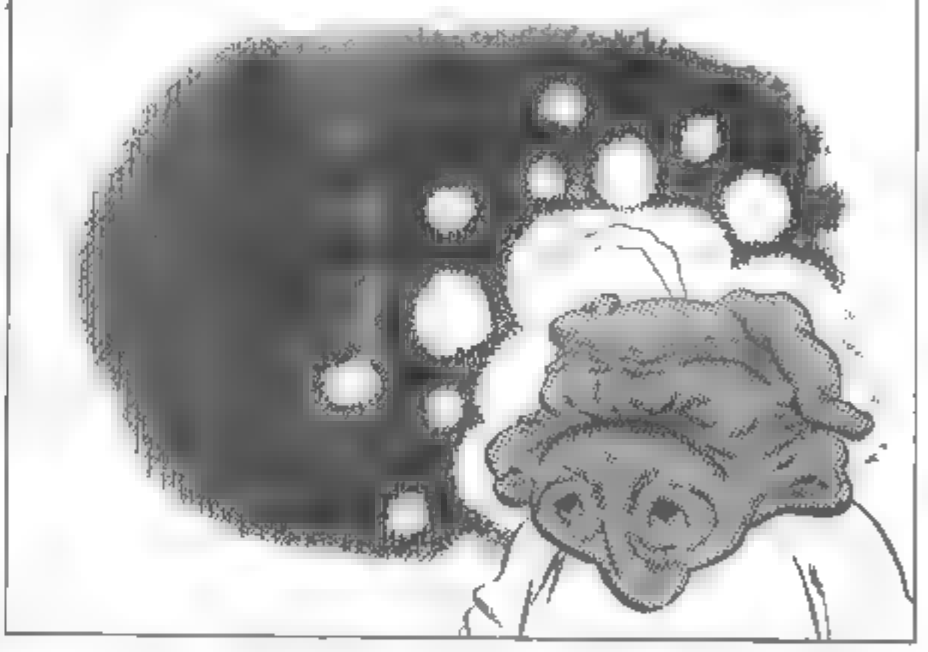


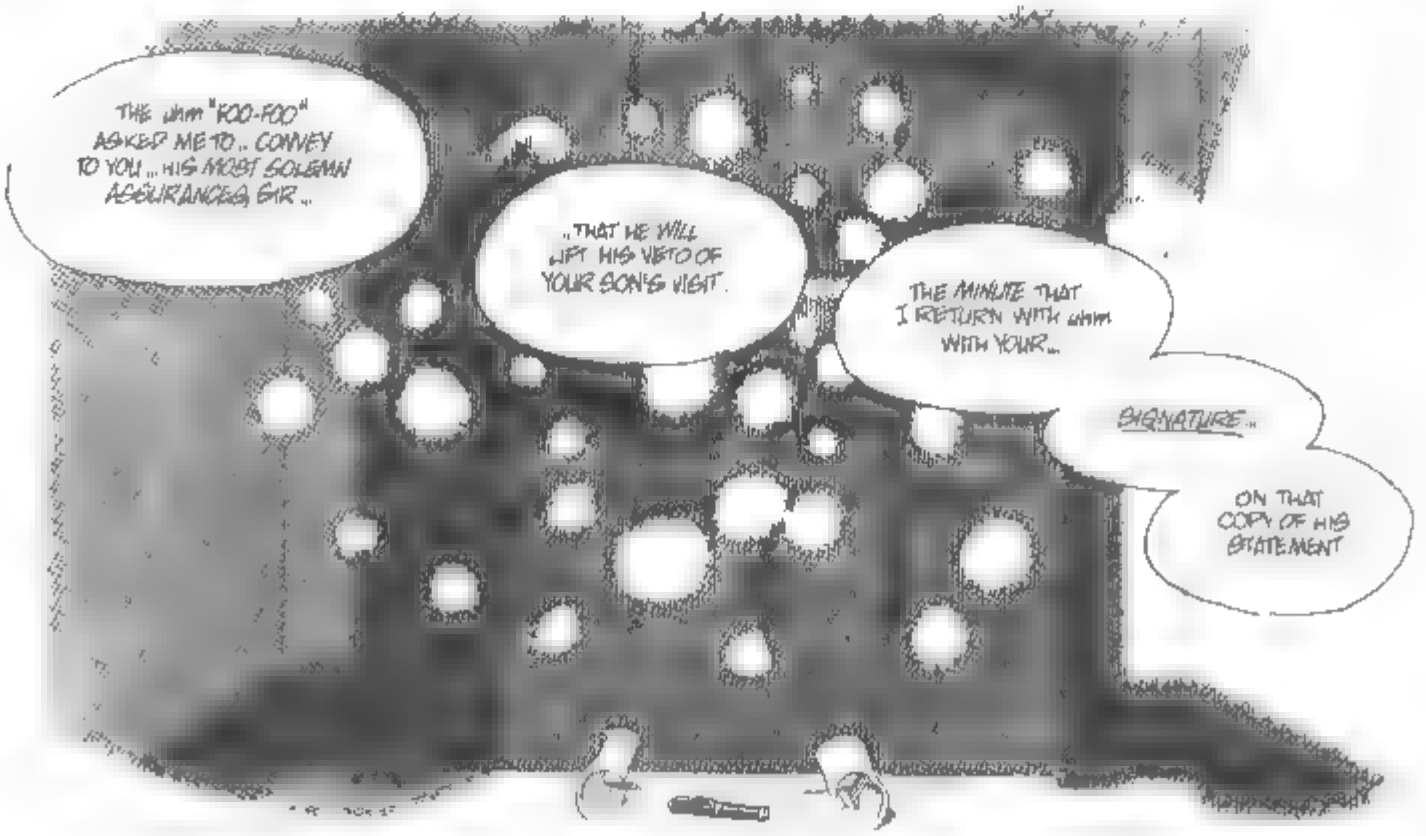

WELL, OF ALL THE COCKEYED, HARE-BRAINED IDIOTIC
KLONK.
Flump
WHAT IN THE NAME OF


Tump.








THE Uhm "KOO-FOO" ASKED ME TO.. CONVEY TO YOU ... HIS MOST SOLEMN ASSURANCES, SIR ..
.. THAT HE WILL LIFT HIS VETO OF YOUR SON'S VISIT.
THE MINUTE THAT I RETURN WITH Uhm WITH YOUR..
SIGNATURE..
ON THAT COPY OF HIS STATEMENT

MY MOM WAS A SCHIZOPHRENIC

SCHIZOPHRENIA IS AN ORGANIC DISEASE OF THE BRAIN.

THIS IS WHAT MOST PEOPLE IN OUR SOCIETY BELIEVE -- THAT SCHIZOPHRENIA IS A MENTAL ILLNESS.

WE CAN TRACE THIS BELIEF BACK TO EMIL KRAEPELIN AND EUGEN BLEULER.

I'M EMIL KRAEPELIN. IN 1898 I DISCOVERED A NEW DISEASE -- I CALLED IT DEMENTIA PRAECOX.

I'M EUGEN BLEULER. IN 1911 I HORNED IN ON KRAEPELIN'S ACT BY GIVING DEMENTIA PRAECOX A NEW NAME -- I CALLED IT SCHIZOPHRENIA.

I BELIEVE THAT SCHIZOPHRENIA IS THE OUTCOME OF A PATHOLOGICAL, ANATOMICAL, OR CHEMICAL DISTURBANCE OF THE BRAIN.

WHY SHOULD WE CARE ABOUT WHAT KRAEPELIN AND BLEULER BELIEVED ?

THOMAS SZASZ

WHY... DO PSYCHIATRISTS CONTINUE TO RECORD KRAEPELIN'S AND BLEULER'S BELIEFS REGARDING THE NATURE OF SCHIZOPHRENIA ?

WHY DO THEY NOT EMPHASIZE INSTEAD KRAEPELIN'S AND BLEULER'S UTTER INABILITY TO SUPPORT THEIR BELIEFS WITH A SHRED OF RELEVANT EVIDENCE ?

KRAEPELIN AND BLEULER DID NOT DISCOVER THE DISEASES FOR WHICH THEY ARE FAMOUS -- THEY INVENTED THEM.

ACCORDING TO THE PAMPHLET *UNDERSTANDING SCHIZOPHRENIA* (RECENTLY PUBLISHED BY THE ONTARIO MINISTRY OF HEALTH) THESE ARE THE SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF SCHIZOPHRENIA.

① DELUSIONS
② HALLUCINATIONS
③ THOUGHT DISORDER
④ LOSS OF MOTIVATION
⑤ FLAT EMOTIONAL RESPONSE

YOU'LL NOTICE THAT THESE "SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS" RELATE TO A PERSON'S BELIEFS AND BEHAVIOUR.

① DELUSIONS
② HALLUCINATIONS
③ THOUGHT DISORDER
④ LOSS OF MOTIVATION
⑤ FLAT EMOTIONAL RESPONSE

THIS IS SOMETHING DIFFERENT THAN FINDING A LUMP IN YOUR BREAST OR COUGHING UP BLOOD.

DESPITE THEORIES ABOUT CHEMICAL IMBALANCES, BRAIN SHRINKAGE AND GENETIC DEFECTS --

-- SCHIZOPHRENIA DOESN'T SHOW UP IN BLOOD OR URINE TESTS, C.A.T SCANS, D.N.A. ANALYSIS, OR IN ANY OTHER TEST SCIENCE HAS THOUGHT UP -- NOT EVEN IN POST-MORTEM EXAMINATIONS OF BRAIN TISSUE.

THERE ARE, OF COURSE, DISEASES, SUCH AS SYPHILIS, WHICH CAN AFFECT THE BRAIN; BUT THERE ARE DIAGNOSTIC TESTS FOR THESE DISEASES.

PSYCHIATRISTS TODAY DIAGNOSE SCHIZOPHRENIA THE SAME WAY KRAEPELIN AND BLEULER DID --

--NOT BY LOOKING FOR SIGNS OF DISEASE BUT BY LOOKING FOR SOCIALLY UNACCEPTABLE BELIEFS AND BEHAVIOUR.

BEFORE 1973 HOMOSEXUALITY WAS CONSIDERED A MENTAL ILLNESS -- IN THAT YEAR THE AMERICAN PSYCHIATRIC ASSOCIATION TOOK A VOTE WHICH DECIDED THAT IT WAS NO LONGER ONE.

TODAY WE CAN SEE THAT GAY PEOPLE BEFORE THE '60'S WERE MISERABLE NOT BECAUSE THEY SUFFERED FROM A MENTAL ILLNESS--

--BUT BECAUSE THEY LIVED IN A HOMOPHOBIC CULTURE.

MANY, POSSIBLY MOST, GAY PEOPLE IN THAT HOMOPHOBIC CULTURE COULDN'T SEE BEYOND THEIR CULTURE'S ASSUMPTIONS--

--THEY BELIEVED THAT THEY WERE SICK.

THE SCHIZOPHRENIC IS LIKE A MAN PERMANENTLY UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF MESCALIN.

ALDOUS HUXLEY

THE L.S.D. PHENOMENON... IS AN INTENTIONALLY ACHIEVED SCHIZOPHRENIA.

JOSEPH CAMPBELL

BECAUSE OF ACCIDENTS OF BOTANY AND HISTORY, EUROPEAN CULTURE HAS BEEN AWAY FROM THE PSYCHEDELIC DIMENSIONS AWHILE...

TERENCE McKENNA

...WE CALL THEM "SCHIZOPHRENIA" AND SLAM THE DOOR.

THE SHAMAN IS A PERSON... WHO IN EARLY ADOLESCENCE UNDERWENT A SEVERE PSYCHOLOGICAL CRISIS, SUCH AS TODAY WOULD BE CALLED A PSYCHOSIS.

YESTERDAY'S SHAMAN IS TODAY'S CHRONIC SCHIZOPHRENIC!

SETH FARBER

NOT ALL SHAMANS USE INTOXICATION WITH PLANTS TO OBTAIN ECSTASY, BUT ALL SHAMANIC PRACTICE AIMS TO GIVE RISE TO ECSTASY.

NONORDINARY STATES OF CONSCIOUSNESS... ARE IN SOME INSTANCES INDUCED BY THE USE OF SACRED PSYCHEDELIC PLANTS... AND IN OTHERS BY POWERFUL NONDRUG TECHNIQUES--

STANISLAV GROF

--THAT COMBINE IN VARIOUS WAYS RESPIRATORY MANEUVERS, CHANTING, DRUMMING, MONOTONOUS DANCING, SENSORY OVERLOAD, SOCIAL AND SENSORY ISOLATION, FASTING, AND SLEEP DEPRIVATION...

...THE SPECTRUM OF EXPERIENCES INDUCED BY PSYCHEDELIC COMPOUNDS IS PRACTICALLY INDISTINGUISHABLE FROM THOSE RESULTING FROM VARIOUS NONDRUG TECHNIQUES.

IF IT'S POSSIBLE TO ***INTENTIONALLY*** REACH THE PSYCHEDELIC STATE WITHOUT DRUGS, THEN ISN'T IT ALSO POSSIBLE THAT ONE COULD ***ACCIDENTALLY*** ENTER THE PSYCHEDELIC STATE WITHOUT DRUGS--

--AND THAT THIS IS WHAT WE OFTEN CALL SCHIZOPHRENIA?

LOOK AT GROF'S LIST AND THINK ABOUT INSOMNIA, HUNGER, THE STERILE BARRENESS OF MODERN CITIES --

-- HOW WE'RE BOMBARDED BY THE MEDIA, THE MONOTONOUS RHYTHMS AND REPETITIVE TASKS OF SO MANY WORK-PLACES --

-- AND THE ISOLATION AND LONELINESS THAT ARE EVERYWHERE IN OUR SOCIETY.

PEOPLE OFTEN HAVE TERRIBLE EXPER-IENCES ON PSYCHE-DELIC DRUGS -- BAD TRIPS.

SCHIZO-PHRENICS, IN OUR SOCIETY, ALMOST ALWAYS HAVE BAD TRIPS.

PSYCHEDELICS CAN ALSO GIVE THE USER TRANSCEN-DENTALLY ECSTATIC EXPERI-ENCES.

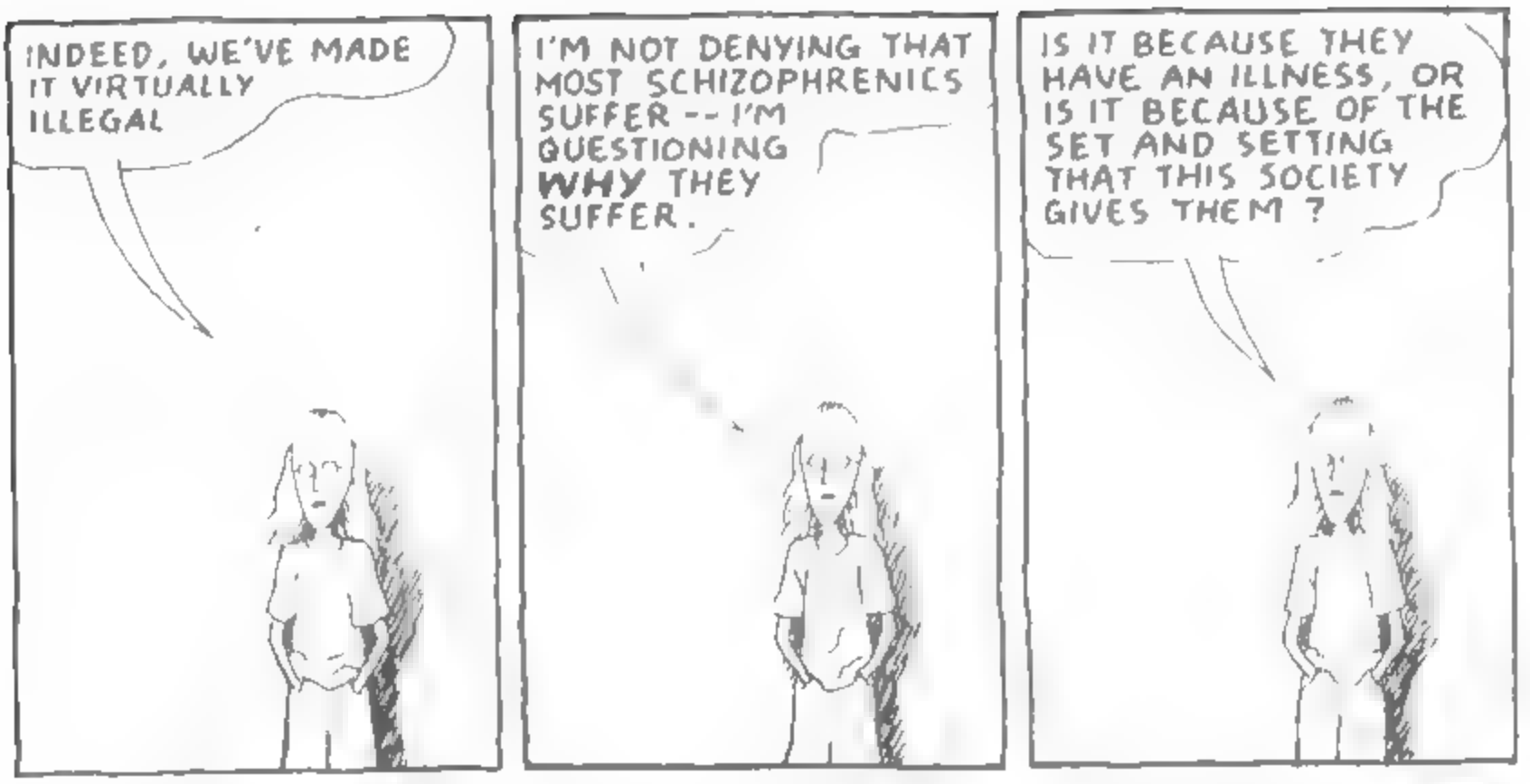
SCHIZO-PHRENICS OCCASIONALLY HAVE SIMILARLY POSITIVE REVELATIONS DURING THEIR PSYCHOTIC EPISODES.

WHY DON'T SCHIZOPHRENICS HAVE MORE GOOD TRIPS ? COULD IT HAVE SOMETHING TO DO WITH OUR FEAR OF, AND CULTURAL ASSUMPTIONS ABOUT, SCHIZOPHRENIA ?

ADVOCATES OF PSYCHEDELICS BELIEVE THAT THE TYPE OF TRIP YOU HAVE DEPENDS ON WHAT TIMOTHY LEARY CALLED THE "SET AND SETTING".

ESSENTIALLY, IF YOU HAVE A POSITIVE MIND-SET AND ARE IN A POSITIVE, COMFORTING SETTING YOU'LL HAVE A GOOD TRIP -- A NEGATIVE SET AND SETTING EQUAL A BAD TRIP.

ALMOST ALL OF US HAVE A NEGATIVE MIND-SET IN REGARDS TO SCHIZOPHRENIA AND WE LIVE IN A CULTURE WHICH IS VERY FEARFUL OF THE EXPERIENCE.


INDEED, WE'VE MADE IT VIRTUALLY ILLEGAL
I'M NOT DENYING THAT MOST SCHIZOPHRENICS SUFFER -- I'M QUESTIONING WHY THEY SUFFER.
IS IT BECAUSE THEY HAVE AN ILLNESS, OR IS IT BECAUSE OF THE SET AND SETTING THAT THIS SOCIETY GIVES THEM ?

THE ORDINARY PERSON IS A SHRIVELLED, DESICCATED FRAGMENT OF WHAT A PERSON CAN BE...
R D LAING
...WHAT WE CALL "NORMAL" IS A PRODUCT OF REPRESSION, DENIAL, SPLITTING, PROJECTION, INTROJECTION AND OTHER DESTRUCTIVE ACTION ON EXPERIENCE
.. THE "NORMALLY" ALIENATED PERSON, BY REASON OF THE FACT THAT HE ACTS MORE OR LESS LIKE EVERYONE ELSE, IS TAKEN TO BE SANE.

OTHER FORMS OF ALIENATION ARE THOSE THAT ARE LABELED BY THE "NORMAL" MAJORITY AS BAD OR MAD...
... CAN WE NOT SEE THAT THIS VOYAGE [SCHIZOPHRENIA] IS NOT WHAT WE NEED TO BE CURED OF--
-- BUT THAT IT IS ITSELF A NATURAL WAY OF HEALING OUR OWN APPALLING STATE OF ALIENATION CALLED NORMALITY ?

WOB 95

Chester Brown's
Notes for

"My Mom Was a Schizophrenic"

(first appeared on inside back cover of *Underwater* No 4, September 1995 revised in 1998 for publication in *The Little Man Short Strips 1980-1995* both published by Drawn & Quarterly Publications, Montreal)

My mother died in an institution in 1976. (See *I Never Liked You* for more—though not much more—on this.) I became curious about what mental illness was—about what had happened to her. I read books on the subject, but their answers seemed vague and unsatisfying. It wasn't until I came across Thomas Szasz's *Schizophrenia – The Sacred Symbol of Psychiatry* (1976) in 1990 that I felt that my questions were beginning to be answered. I read more books by Szasz and then books by other "anti-psychiatry" authors. I realized that people weren't generally familiar with the ideas of these authors and decided to try and create a short "introduction to anti-psychiatry" type of strip. (Both Szasz and R.D. Laing rejected the "anti-psychiatry" label when it first came into use in the '60's, but I personally see nothing wrong with the term. Psychiatry is a branch of medicine and if one believes that so-called "mental illnesses" should not be treated as medical problems—as Szasz does and the late Dr. Laing did—then it seems sensible to me to accept that one is against psychiatry: anti-psychiatry. Szasz and Laing, though, are/were themselves psychiatrists, and I suspect that they wanted to continue to use that title for professional reasons.)

I've always liked finding those evangelical Christian mini-comics (particularly the ones drawn by Jack Chick) that true-believers leave for free in telephone booths and bus shelters. So I started to think about doing this anti-psychiatry strip as an eight-page mini-comic that I would distribute in the same way. My original plan was to only print it as a mini-comic, but then I realized that I should print it in *Underwater* if I really wanted as many people as possible to read it. (As a mini I could only distribute it in Toronto whereas UW is distributed across North America.) I still kept it to eight pages (the strip is six pages and the notes originally took up two pages) and, after it was published in *Underwater* #4, I printed it up as a mini-comic and put it in telephone booths and bus shelters around Toronto. I felt a bit silly doing this, particularly since I only had the energy to distribute a couple hundred of the mini-comics and Underwater #4 had reached thousands of people. But one of those mini-comics ended up in the hands of someone who worked for the Mental Patients Association of Vancouver, and that organization asked if they could print the strip in their newsletter, *In A Nutshell*. I agreed of course.

Following are the notes that originally accompanied the strip in 1995 (with a few slight alterations of phrasing here and there).

Page 1: Panel 2 – I'm quoting Dr. Rob Buckman of TVOntario's *Vital Signs*

1:5 - 1:7 – I'm not directly quoting Kraepelin and Bleuler here—I'm paraphrasing material from Szasz's *Schizophrenia - The Sacred Symbol of Psychiatry*. According to Szasz, Bleuler in late life did an about-face and admitted that psychiatric definitions "are forensic and not medical."

1:8-2:2 – From Szasz's *Schizophrenia - The Sacred Symbol of Psychiatry*. Emphasis added.

2:3 – Recently = 1994.

2:4 – I thought it was obvious how these "signs and symptoms" relate to beliefs and behaviour, but one person I've shown this strip to has argued the point with me, so I'll explain my reasoning.

1) & 2). X talks to a person no one else can see or hear. This is odd behaviour but it is behaviour none-the-less. If X actually believes that X is talking to someone, you or I may think that X is deluded (or incorrect - to use a less "loaded" word which means the same thing) but that doesn't make it any less a belief of X's.

3). This one might not seem to be connected to a person's beliefs or behaviour (thoughts are not behaviour and aren't necessarily beliefs) but then you have to remember that psychiatrists aren't mind readers. They're actually judging how a person speaks and what they say, and speech is a form of behaviour.

4). It may seem like odd behaviour if a person who's been a go-getter all their life suddenly only wants to lie on their bed and look at the ceiling but (again) it is behaviour

5) How a person expresses emotion is clearly a form of behaviour

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This isn't to say that behaviour can't be an indication of disease. Last year the cat my girlfriend and I live with seemed to have a "loss of motivation" —all she wanted to do was lie around on the sofa. Since this contrasted with her previously active behaviour we were concerned and took her to the vet. It turned out that she had an infected gall bladder and needed surgery. The vet established this, however, not just by looking at the cat's behaviour but by conducting various diagnostic tests. Had those tests not found anything wrong, we wouldn't have concluded that our cat was schizophrenic—there are plenty of healthy cats who do little but lie around on sofas. But while it's fine for cats to lie around all day and do nothing, it's socially unacceptable for humans

Szasz argues that psychiatry has became our society's method of policing disapproved human behaviour that is beyond the reach of the criminal justice system.

2:6-2:7 – See psychiatrist Peter Breggin's *Toxic Psychiatry* (St. Martin's Press, 1991) for a detailed examination and debunking of the various "mental illness" theories. I wish I'd had room in the strip to bring up Breggin's contention that psychiatric drugs are used, not to heal people, but to control them. Actually the anti-psychotic drugs do the opposite of healing. Even the Ontario Ministry of Health's *Understanding Schizophrenia* admits that these drugs can cause tardive dyskinesia - which "is damage to the central nervous system, sometimes permanent damage. TD can be so severe that it is disabling." *Understanding Schizophrenia*

doesn't give the risk rates, but according to Breggin, "all long-term patients are likely to succumb to tardive dyskinesia."

3.2 In her book, *They Say You're Crazy* (Addison-Wesley, 1995), psychologist Paula J. Caplan reports that the vote was 5854 to 3810.

3.7 From Huxley's *The Doors of Perception* (1954).

3.8 From Campbell's *Myths To Live By* (1972).

3.9-4.1 – From McKenna's *The Archaic Revival* (Harper Collins, 1991). Because I've cut and switched around McKenna's words, I'm going to give them to you here the way he wrote them:

> *Modern epistemological methods are just not prepared for dealing with chattering, elf infested spaces. We have a word for those spaces – we call them "schizophrenia" and slam the door. But these dimensions have been with us ten thousand times longer than Freud. Other societies have come to terms with them. Because of accidents of botany and history, European culture has been away from the psychedelic dimensions awhile.*

3.7-4.1 – Martin Lee and Bruce Shlain's book *Acid Dreams* (1985) details the scientific debate that took place in the '50's and '60's over whether LSD and similar drugs were psychedelic (mind manifesting) or psychotomimetic (madness mimicking). The psychedelic faction believed that these drugs could be beneficial to people, while those who used the word psychotomimetic believed that they made people crazy. Apparently it occurred to no one that maybe *both* sides of the debate were right.

4.2 – From *Myths To Live By*.

4.3 – From psychologist Farber's *Madness, Heresy, And The Rumor Of Angels* (Open Court Publishing, 1993).

4.4 – From McKenna's *Food Of The Gods* (Bantam, 1992).

4.5-4.7 – From psychiatrist Grof's *The Adventure Of Self-Discovery* (State University of New York Press, 1988).

4:9 – No doubt some people who are diagnosed as being schizophrenic are not in a psychedelic-like mental state. One can have "Flat emotional responses", "loss of motivation", and "thought disorders" for reasons other than being in an altered mental state. At the heart of the experience I'm talking about is psychosis (hallucinations and delusions).

5.1-5:3 – I should add that I don't think Grof's list exhausts all of the possible non-drug ways by which people can enter this state. Many of the things Grof lists seem to be attempts to induce stress and I suspect that other stress inducing experiences—like, for example, extreme negative emotion—could produce the same results.

5:5 – For examples see *Madness, Heresy And The Rumor Of Angels* for the stories of Barbara and Angela. Each had psychotic experiences that they described in positive terms. Barbara "felt safe and secure and very happy." Angela felt "wonderful! It was as if I'd gotten the code to the universe." When committed to psychiatric institutions both women quickly started to feel like schizophrenics are supposed to: terrible.

Also see Michael Schumacher's *Dharma Lion* (1992) for his account of Allen Ginsberg's 1948 non-drug-induced "mystical" experiences in which he heard "the voice of [William] Blake, speaking to him through eternity," and saw "that the people around him now had the faces of wild animals."

Because we're not used to thinking of psychosis as being potentially good, most people who have such experiences are more likely to call them mystical.

5.7-5:8 – I first encountered Leary's ideas in Robert Anton Wilson's *Cosmic Trigger* (1977).

6:4-6.9 – From Laing's *The Politics of Experience* (1967). Laing's suggestion that schizophrenia might be a healing experience in the right context will seem so far-fetched to those who haven't encountered it before (and to many of those who have) that I suppose it'd be a good idea to give an example. (In *The Politics of Experience* Laing gives a detailed case history which illustrates his point. Rather than condense it, I'll give a different—and more famous—example.)

Science fiction author Philip K. Dick, in the posthumously published journal *In Pursuit of Valis* (Underwood-Miller, 1991), gives an autobiographical account of an experience that began in March 1974 and continued for about a year.

> *It appeared—in vivid fire, with shining colors and balanced patterns. It seized me entirely, lifting me from the limitations of the space-time matrix.*

In another entry, Dick explains that during this period he believed that he "was someone else... From another time period... Dead centuries ago and reborn." Dick frequently asserts throughout *In Pursuit of Valis* that this experience healed him.

> *when it left me, it left me as a free person, a physically and mentally healed person who had seen reality suddenly, in a flash, at the moment of greatest peril and pain and despair; it had loaned me it's power and it had set right what had by degrees become wrong over God knows how long.*

Although Dick seems to have generally believed that his experience was mystical, he didn't become dogmatically attached to any single explanation and several times in *In Pursuit of Valis* he seriously considers the possibility that he was psychotic. He couldn't, however, get past the popular view that psychosis is always experienced negatively. In one of the later entries of the book, from 1981 (Dick died in early '82), he wrote:

> *In 2-3-74 came comprehension and recognition, there also came the end of—the healing of—the gulf that separated me from the world. This is 180 degrees away from psychosis. Viewed psychologically, this is, in fact, a healing; it is repair.*

Well, I guess Dick never read *The Politics of Experience*.

Incidentally, I've used the word "heal" in this note in a metaphorical sense. I don't believe Laing meant to imply that "normally" is any more an actual disease than schizophrenia is.

A friend who read this piece asked me what my solution to the problem was.

Was the solution to the "mental illness" of homosexuality a new form of psychotherapy or a new drug? No, it was the gradual decreasing in our society of homophobia. If we could similarly get rid of our fear of schizophrenia I believe our problems with it would decrease and possibly disappear. People who see this as

unrealistic are ignoring the fact that in some cultures if you "hear voices" or see things that other people can't see, you aren't a person with a problem you're a person with a gift

Recently, a gay friend of mine came out of the closet Most of his friends and family responded positively They were supportive of what they saw as a new, adventurous phase of his life. During my first acid trip, I became convinced that I wasn't going to recover my sanity—that the drug had driven me permanently crazy. I knew that my family and friends weren't going to have a Laingian perspective on this. I figured I had institutionalization, mind numbing neuroleptic drugs, and possibly electro-shock to look forward to. I decided that rather than face this bleak future I'd commit suicide. Fortunately, I came out of the trip before I could throw myself off a bridge. But the experience clearly illustrated for me why schizophrenics can be suicidal and how the attitudes of society affect and make it negative. If I could have looked forward to an attitude of support for a new, adventurous phase of my life, I suspect that I would have had a better trip.

Another friend told me of a recent news story a schizophrenic had stopped taking his "medication" and had then slashed the face of a child. This friend believed that all schizophrenics should be forced to take anti-psychotic drugs to keep them non-violent. The notion that psychotics are violent is a myth. Sure, some are—but so are plenty of non-psychotic ("normal") people. If we're going to drug *all* schizophrenics because *a few* are potentially violent, then logically we should also be drugging all non-psychotic people to keep the violent ones in check. But drugging schizophrenics has nothing to do with logic and everything to do with fear of people who "aren't like us."

Okay, that's what I wrote in 1995. Now back to 1998:

I mentioned a number of books in this strip's notes, but I'd like to particularly recommend two of them for their scope and their readability:

- *Madness, Heresy, And The Rumor Of Angels*, by Seth Farber, and
  Toxic Psychiatry, by Peter Breggin.

After *"My Mom Was a Schizophrenic"* was published, a number of readers wrote letters to point out to me that schizophrenia has been "proven" to have a genetic cause or has been "proven" to be caused by a "chemical imbalance" in the brain. If you've fallen for either of these psychiatrically promulgated beliefs, then please refer to chapter five of Breggin's book to be disabused of them

One reader wrote me a letter to point out what looked to him like a contradiction: A psychedelic-like mental state would likely be caused by "chemicals, endogenous to the brain" —shouldn't this be described as a chemical imbalance in the brain? My problem with that term isn't with the word "chemical" but with the word "imbalance", which implies that the brain is functioning incorrectly when someone enters psychosis. I think it's the opposite—that the brain is as much in balance when a person is psychotic as when a person is "normal" and that *if* a "chemical endogenous to the brain" is responsible for psychosis, it's because the brain is *supposed* to release that chemical from time to time when circumstances seem to warrant it

Why would the brain do this? Why would it deliberately go into a psychedelic-like state as a response to stress and extreme emotion? I don't know, but that's not going to stop me from speculating

In the right circumstances (like in pastoral "natural" settings) psychedelics can be very pleasant. Perhaps the brain evolved (in those natural settings) so that whenever things got too intense it could flood itself with a psychedelic-like chemical in order to feel good again—get high—get in touch with life at a deeper "mystical" level. The brain just didn't know when it was evolving this "coping mechanism" thousands of years ago, that at some point in the future human society would become antithetical to the psychedelic experience. As a result, now, when the "coping mechanism" goes into effect, it's usually a bad experience instead of a good one

A second possible explanation depends on whether Timothy Leary's belief that psychedelics could be used to "reprogram" the brain is correct. Leary's experiment with prisoners at Concord State prison in Massachusetts seemed to confirm this belief. He told prison officials that by giving consenting inmates psilocybin he could cut the recidivism rate, and he did.

> *Leary had obtained success or failure in terms of where the bodies were in space-time two years after release from prison. At that time, he noted gladly, over 80% of them were still outside prison, whereas the majority of released convicts are back inside prison within two years. Dr. Walter Huston Clark, in 1976, noted that the bodies of most of Leary's convicts known to him were still outside prison in space-time after 15 years [From Robert Anton Wilson's Cosmic Trigger.]*

If Dr. Leary was right that psychedelics can be used to reprogram the brain, and if I'm right that psychosis is a psychedelic-like mental state, then psychosis might have evolved as a built-in-psychedelic-reprogramming-system that the brain uses in extreme circumstances. (Like Philip K. Dick's "moment of greatest peril and pain and despair".)

But if this a coping mechanism or the brain's way of reprogramming itself, why does the brain stay in this state for months and years? Laing suspected that psychiatric interventions prolonged the person from "naturally" coming out of it. Irit Shimrat's experience (as recorded in *Call Me Crazy*, Press Gang Publishers, 1997) would seem to confirm this:

> *[T]he first and second times I went mad, I got professional help—hospitalization and drugs—and stayed crazy for months, and the third time I got help from a friend who wasn't scared because she'd been there herself— and it was over in a few hours*

A book that I didn't mention in the notes but which I'd also like to recommend is Jeffrey Moussaieff Masson's *Against Terapy* (1988). It's not so much anti-psychiatry as it is anti-every-aspect-of-the-mental-health-system – a scathing indictment of the philosophical assumptions of a system that Masson knew well, both as a psychoanalyst and as projects director of the Sigmund Freud Archives.

Getting *Riel*

Chester Brown discusses his graphic novel,
Louis Riel

Part Two

Okay. That was "My Mom Was a Schizophrenic" For the readers new to your stuff who aren't aware of it, "My Mom..." was the piece that originally gave Chester the taste for comic-book journalism, the research, the annotations and all the headaches that go with it. I remember asking you a while ago what you thought your next project after Riel *might be and you said, "Something completely made up." Keeping track of sources and watching for inconsistencies makes a nice break for a while but, having just spent an hour at the library trying to find out—for the* Latter Days *annotations—which Fellini film has the shot where he was directing the elephant, and having gone through three Fellini books to find the original picture and having read a good fifteen pages around the image, hoping he would say* something *about directing an elephant and mention the name of the film, I finally gave in: I admit that I don't* know *which Fellini film it's from and, furthermore, I don't* care *which Fellini film it's from.*

I was reminded of Chris Shulgan's article on you in the Globe & Mail *14 August (under the grotesque title "Louis 'toons")—I suspect you caused the blackout so everyone would be reading newspapers instead of watching television that day—where he mentions you saying in one of the* Riel *endnotes, "I'm pretty sure I didn't make this up, but I can't find the reference right now" I know Alan did that once in the* From Hell *notes.*

So starting off Part Two, I'm going to ask you to re-read "My Mom..." and the accompanying notes and let us know if there's anything in there that you've changed your mind about in the interim.

It might have been a mistake for me to include the sentence I have Szasz speaking in panel 2:2. I don't believe that Kraepelin and Bleuer *invented* schizophrenia—I think they misidentified it as a disease. Using that Szasz line may have muddied what I was saying.

Also, after the strip was published in *Underwater* #4, it occurred to me that R.D. Laing's use of the word "heal" (in panel 6:9) seemed a bit awkward since the strip rejected the medical model of mental "illness". Laing also rejected the medical model, so it's clear that he was using the word in a metaphorical sense, but it still made me uneasy. I'd rephrase the Laing panels thusly: "Most people (probably all people) are far (probably very far) from achieving their full potential. A person who's having a schizophrenic experience might, through that process, get a bit closer to achieving their potential." My rephrasing sounds less impressive, but I'm more comfortable with the idea when expressed like that.

The phrase, "the sterile barrenness of modern cities" jumped out at me from panel 5:1 on re-reading. What I was saying in panels 5:1 to 5:3 was supposed to relate to the Stanislav Grof quote in panel 4:6. Insomnia connects to sleep deprivation, hunger to fasting, and so on. It's apparent that I was trying to think of an everday way that people could experience "sensory isolation" in contemporary culture terms and the best I could come up with was calling modern cities sterile and barren. I'm sure that Grof was thinking in terms of isolation tanks or whatever ways shamans have of cutting themselves off from the outside world. I don't care how sterile and barren a particular modern city is, walking down that city's streets will not be in any way similar to being in an isolation tank. And, for the record, I find the modern city that I live in to be fascinating and beautiful.

I think those are all relatively minor points. Overall, I still agree with the strip's ideas.

As I do, as well, with many of them. Let's start with the areas of profound disagreement—Dave Sim versus the world—and then gradually make our way back to Louis Riel.

Dave Sim versus the world: I completely disagree with the term "homophobia" since a "phobia" implies fear. The natural reaction to homosexuality isn't fear, but repulsion, disgust. If I'm walking down the street and I see a pool of vomit on the sidewalk, the most natural reaction is repulsion. I don't hate *the vomit, I'm not* afraid *of the vomit, I am* repelled *by the vomit. Which is a natural, sensible reflex reaction. The very recently-innovated notion of "homophobia" implies that my natural, sensible reaction is wrong—that is, that I should learn to overcome my repulsion for the pool of vomit, force myself into closer proximity to the specific pool of vomit and into a greater acceptance of vomit in general. "Look, Dave. The pool of vomit isn't going to hurt you. The pool of vomit is completely natural, as much a part of life and living as you are. Here, put your hand in it. Let me show you."*

Uh, no. Thanks, but no thanks.

My own best guess is that my acute awareness of this (to me) central fact of reality stems from celibacy (five-and-half years and counting).' After a few years of celibacy (and only after going through an extended period where you perceive of yourself as being in a state of deprivation: poor me, no fornication), you very gradually, but inevitably begin to regain your God-given awareness of the natural reaction to fornication. disgust. The disgust that virtually all heterosexual men feel *(in the* visceral, *as opposed to* emotional *sense of the term "feel"), as an example, at the thought of male homosexual acts is, it seems to me, a natural, sensible reflex reaction. As natural and sensible a reflex reaction as the natural post-orgasmic shame and disgust with themselves. Thirty seconds ago, in the full heat of arousal, masturbation or coitus seemed like the absolute best idea in the world. This. Is. SO! GREAT! And then. Spooey. Spooey. Spooey. Spooey. And there you are. Feeling the same as you did when you were a*

two-year-old and you had soiled your diapers. The analogy, I think, is apt. What's missing in our society, to me (and, as I say, I'm perfectly aware that I'm alone in this) isn't greater acceptance of and celebration of homosexuality but the recovery of notions of individual, primary continence. Con-tin-ence n. *"self-restraint,"* esp: *a refraining from sexual intercourse 2: the ability to retain a bodily discharge voluntarily". I suspect that a lifetime of incontinence—our society-wide aspiration to completely lose all forms of self-restraint in all areas of appetite—implies its own reward: fecal and urinary incontinence in old age. Sales of adult diapers are soaring. Put another way, I suspect that continence is one of those "use it or lose it" things. Practice it generally or lose it in a very specific area you'd really rather not re-experience.*

The contrast that I saw between you and Joe Matt is a good example. Joe always tried to persuade me that your using prostitutes—or, rather, escorts (I think we have to draw a distinction between streetwalkers and call-girls) was somehow worse than his masturbating umpty-ump times a day. Along the same lines, your saying that you masturbate, but less frequently to *orgasm than* not-to-*orgasm (and I really have to say that you guys have floored me from day one with the explicitness of your awareness of each other's sex lives and the naturalness with which you discussed it), seemed to indicate at least a nodding acquaintanceship with continence. And you do seem to be aware that the longer the period of time between visits to your "girlfriends" the better.*

Anything you want to add, before we get back to more literal areas of schizophrenia?

Regarding sexual disgust:

I was thirteen and in grade eight when I figured male-female sex out (and I did have to figure it out—no one told me. I'd been attending sex-education classes since grade five, but they'd consisted of watching films of acorns growing into trees and fish doing funny dances and such). It came to me in a flash of insight (based mostly on information gleaned from "dirty" jokes) and my reaction was, "Ugh—that's *disgusting!*" Suddenly I was looking at married couples, thinking, "Gross"—and, of course, the ultimate gross-out was looking at my parents with my new-found knowledge. A few months later, I became aware that some men did similar things with other men—my reaction was the same: "Ugh—that's *disgusting!*" And that basic reaction is still the same today. I still find sex—hetero and homo—disgusting. My sexual desire for women I find attractive overwhelms that disgust—though, even in the middle of sex, there's usually a small voice in my head saying, "I can't believe she's letting me do this disgusting thing to her." I don't know if you see my disgust at thirteen as a God-given natural reaction to fornication, but if you do, why was I grossed-out when I contemplated *married* couples having sex?

Maybe there is a natural disgust reaction to sex, but I think a social explanation is more likely to be true. In my case, sex had been hidden from me for thirteen years and the constant message I got about other people's genitals (and mine in particular) was: they're dirty, they're disgusting, keep them hidden. I think that message completely explains my disgust reaction to my flash-of-insight at thirteen. And I suspect that there is a way to raise kids so that they don't grow up to experience sex as disgusting

Actually, Chet, the fact is—if you were drawing them accurately in The Playboy—*you have singularly ugly genitals. They* are *disgusting if they actually look like that.*

Seriously, I think you had a more traditional religious upbringing which starts with the natural disgust reaction to the sex act and then qualifies it relative to marriage in conformity to God's injunction to "Be fruitful and multiply," which, it seems to me, is the right way around. I had no religious upbringing. Dr Spock was my parent's Bible and the good Dr. was most emphatic about treating sex as a very natural ordinary part of life and that you mustn't traumatize a child by punishing or even disapproving of sexual exploration and curiosity. Which they didn't. So my reaction to male-female sex when I figured it out (sex education classes had been as useless in my day as they were in yours) was "Where do I get some?" It dumbfounded me that it hadn't been arranged for. Why wasn't there a specific brothel for eleven-year-old boys (the age I started masturbating)? Where were the eleven-year-old hookers that I could afford on my five-dollar-a-week allowance—I thought 30 cents sounded fair, considering that comic books were 15 cents. Completely and utterly immoral. I think that's the net effect of trying to separate sex from religious-based morality.

Sorry, I interrupted you there.

Regarding post-orgasmic shame:

I've certainly experienced it after masturbation (I mention it in *The Playboy*—p. 44) but I can't recall ever experiencing it after coitus—not even after having sex with prostitutes. (Incidentally, I don't draw a distinction between prostitutes, escorts, street-walkers and call-girls—it's all the same profession. Anyone who's likely to see me as a creep or a loser for paying for sex isn't going to change their mind upon finding out that the women I see think of themselves as "escorts". After we'd screwed, one "escort" made a point of telling me that she wasn't a prostitute. I thought this was charming and sweet, so I made no effort to argue her out of her belief, but I also thought that she was deluding herself. I see "escorts" or "call-girls," not because of any kind of higher social status they might have in the paying-for-sex business, but because they're less risky than streetwalkers from a legal point-of-view. I have no desire to be forced to go to "john-school".) And, again, it seems likely to me that my reasons for experiencing that shame after masturbatory ejaculation are societally induced. I said something similar to you in a conversation in the last year-or-so, and your response was, "You're thinking like a feminist." No doubt your reaction will still be the same

Yup. It's a centerpiece of feminist thinking that everything that keeps them from doing exactly what they want to do and enjoying it without guilt or shame is societal conditioning and that all societal conditioning is bad for that reason and needs to be overcome.

I began experiencing shame after coitus once I was no longer able avoid the realization that it meant something else to the other person. They were seeing it as relationship bait, an intimacy symbol, marriage bait, call it what you will. Knowing, definitively, that I would never get married again I enjoyed being "immune"—until reading the Bible and the Koran awakened my

dormant ethical sense No matter what her age, she only had x number of years where her bait was going to attract someone for the purposes she was intending it

I think along the same lines about prostitution. It wears them out prematurely and very few of them put the money to good use or see any need to save or invest it. There are more "grasshopper" prostitutes than "ant" prostitutes, as it were. But I'm sure I'm missing many charming and sweet moments such as you describe I always found women to be at their most interesting, conversationally, immediately after sex.

Sorry, I interrupted you again

Regarding continence:

One day, a couple of years ago, I noticed that I felt particularly alert, vital—"alive". I tried to figure out why I felt so good—had I eaten something different?—no—had I slept more or less than usual the night before?—no Then it occurred to me that I hadn't jerked-off that morning. That was unusual for me then. I began to re-evaluate the Taoist notion that ejaculation depletes some form of energy, which I'd dismissed before So, now I masturbate less often and when I do, I'm less likely to ejaculate. In *Peep Show* #13, Joe made it sound like I had an ejaculation schedule—once every two weeks. There is no schedule—I probably do hit the two-week mark occasionally, but not frequently.

And when I see prostitutes too often, the experience does begin to seem "empty". For the visits to be fun, I have to space them out a bit. Food tastes better after a fast. But I also have financial reasons for not seeing my "girlfriends" too much

I remember Joseph trying to persuade me that you were a "whoremonger" and what did the Bible and the Koran say about that?

Technically, he has a point, but again I think it's a matter of degree. If you were bankrupting yourself using prostitutes or if all of your female friends were prostitutes, that, to me, is a "whoremonger". You don't advocate it but it is your personal choice that you've found "works" for you

I go so long without masturbating these days, that when Joe asked me about my habits, I honestly couldn't remember the last occasion. That was another discussion we had, where I told you that I masturbate without thinking sexual thoughts: that I suspected the corruption lies in the fantasizing, particularly if you conceive of the spirit world as telepathic (which I do). A singularly immoral and vile masturbation fantasy might (and I assume does) count heavily against your Day of Judgment "final grade". That is, I don't think God was kidding when he said, through Jesus, "that there is nothing hid which will not be revealed." I mean, nothing *Mentioning the Taoist "depletion" idea and the fact that food does, indeed, taste better after a fast—I've been fasting on the Sabbath lately and its amazing how the most mundane food that I've purchased (so as not to tempt myself to break the fast prematurely) tastes like ambrosia after fourteen hours without food—brings us into closer proximities of the spirit, the nature of spirit, the rules governing spirit, which I see as central to schizophrenia.*

But, I interrupted you again

Regarding the word, "homophobia".

You're right—someone who reacts negatively to homosexuality is probably feeling disgust, not fear. But, despite root meaning, words have a tendency to change over time. I went out to a nearby bookstore to see how current dictionaries define it. I've got two dictionaries here in my apartment (oops—I mean, my "fashionable" condo)—one from 1979 and one from 1983—neither have an entry for the word.

"Intense and unreasoning hatred of homosexuality and homosexuals"

The Penguin English Dictionary
(2003)

"an extreme and irrational aversion to homosexuality and homosexuals"

The Concise Oxford English Dictionary
(2002)

"irrational fear of, aversion to, or discrimination against homosexuality or homosexuals"

Miriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary
(2002)

Only one of the three I looked at mentions fear Presumably you wouldn't object to the word if it was defined as an "aversion to" homosexuality and/or homosexuals. You might even agree that it's irrational, since you see it stemming from a visceral feeling Unless you want to argue that visceral feelings are a form of rational thought

And you'll be happy to hear that all three dictionaries still define a misogynist as someone who "hates women." So you're still *not* a misogynist.

I remember you telling me in the coffee shop that one time that you thought that people were changing their minds and that it might be considered "okay" to let Dave Sim back into human society. I suspect the consensus still favours the view that I'm a raving misogynist and favours my exile. I remember the nameless horror I experienced when you told me. What if they force me *to come back into the feminist societal delusion? I wake up screaming.*

"Visceral reaction" It's not a feeling, in the emotional sense and it isn't reasoning in an intellectual sense. It's a natural reaction. You see vomit, you're repelled. You're supposed to be. Presumably you could teach yourself to love vomit, to love the texture, the smell, the taste. But that would be pretty hardcore feminism, in my books To think that being revolted by vomit is a result of patriarchal oppression and societal conditioning and, therefore, needs to be overcome

I'm drawn to the "irrational" and "unreasoning" adjectives in the definitions you cite. "Irrational" to whom? "Unreasoning" to whom? "Homophobia" originally meant "fear of men." As a term it has been usurped, as has the term "gay". As has the term "partner". I would no longer, as an example, introduce Gerhard by saying, "This is my partner, Gerhard" I would say, "This is my business *partner, Gerhard" I don't think its "irrational" or "unreasoning" to suspect the motives behind such societal incrementalism. Put as simply as possible (so we can hopefully get to more interesting subjects), I believe in tolerance. In the sense that we all tolerate the fact that everyone is walking around with a mouthful of saliva and rotting food*

particles. It's best not to think about. It's nice of all of us that we, for the most part, keep our mouths closed and when we open our mouths that most of us manage to keep our saliva "indoors". I think that the Gay Rights thing verges on a non-negotiable demand that you must allow a gay person to drool in public. To drool in front of you, and, if he deems it necessary, to drool on you, in the name of rights of free expression

That sounds far-fetched, but remember this all started with giving women the vote. I'm sure the vast majority of men thought at the time, "It's a bit of a stretch, but once they have the vote, they'll be satisfied." In my view, all of these things follow one on the other and women and homosexuals are never going to be satisfied, no matter what you capitulate to. Same-sex marriage is the latest one. Most men delude themselves that if we capitulate on same-sex marriage, that will be the end of it. I have no idea what comes next, but the surest way to find out is to legalize same- sex marriage. The fundamental right to drool on people (if you are perceived by feminist psychiatry to be, by birth, a drooler) isn't that big a leap from Gay Pride Parades

I'll give you the last word here, since, again, I'm well aware that I'm either the only person who thinks this way, or I'm the only person willing to dissent publicly (which amounts to the same thing)

I know you said you'd leave the last word to me here before we move on to schizophrenia, but don't hold yourself back if there's something you really want to reply to here.

I'll limit myself to a couple of sentences so you'll be getting most *of the last word.*

We obviously see sex from very different angles. I know that you think that fornication is wrong for some reason. I come at the subject from the liberal angle that whatever two or more consenting adults want to do together is fine, as long as there's no deception involved. (For example, saying or hinting that you want a long-term relationship when you don't would be wrong.) (And I should add that consenting adults doing whatever is fine as long as they do it on private property. I wouldn't be in favour of people fucking in the middle of the road—if only because it would disrupt traffic.)

Yes, I see fornication as a sin. Before I saw it as a sin, my problem was the reverse: women who claimed only to want sex but who actually wanted a relationship.

A woman tells you that she wants to have sex and your imagination turns "sex" into "relationship bait" based on your generalization of what women use sex for. Yes, some (but not all) women see sex as relationship-bait, but to think that such women *only* see sex that way is reductionist. It's as if someone were to say, "Chester Brown sees comics as a way to make money." That's true, but it ignores all of my other reasons for being a cartoonist—it's only part of the picture. A woman could think of sex as relationship-bait and *also* as something pleasurable for its own sake, as well as a dozen or more other things.

Part of it is being considered "husband material"

There are guys who women just fuck and there are guys women want to marry. They're very seldom the same guys.

"No matter what her age she had x number of years where her bait was going to attract someone." Sure a 70-year-old woman only has "x number of years" left to attract someone, but she might be more than happy to have a short-term sexual relationship with a man in order to get some things she wants (attention, physical comfort) even though she'd rather be with someone who would want to be with her 'til-death-do-us-part. All human relationships involve trade-offs, and sex is no different. Do I think the guy who's offering the 70-year-old woman a short-term relationship is doing anything wrong? No—not if he's not deceiving her.

Statistically, a woman over forty has a greater chance of being kidnapped by terrorists than she does of getting married. I read that somewhere

I will agree with you on this stuff to this degree: there are a lot of guys out there who are uncertain about whether or not they want to be fathers and who are in relationships with women who are in their late 20s, their 30s, even their 40s, who haven't had children yet and who definitely want to. Their potential baby-making time is running out and it's wrong for their boyfriends to dither and say, "I *might* want to be a father, but not right now." I know these guys (most of them) aren't deliberately deceiving their girlfriends. They're genuinely torn and confused on the matter, but it's not right for them to keep their girlfriends on hold—particularly the girlfriends who are in their mid-30s or older. If the eventual answer might be, "No, I don't want to be a father," the guy isn't leaving the woman much time to find someone else who will want to be a father. But that's a particular circumstance. There are women in their 30s and 40s who've already had kids and women who just don't want to be mothers.

As I say, the problem I found was women who said they weren't looking for a relationship, but inevitably started talking about the relationship "going somewhere". Deception is built-in where female emotions are concerned. In my experience

Regarding your generalization of prostitutes as grasshoppers: it seems to me that the john/prostitute relationship is an employer/employee one and I think it's a good thing that most employers aren't concerned about whether their employees are grasshoppers or ants. If I wanted to open some business—a shoe factory or a bookstore or whatever—and I had your level of concern, I wouldn't be able to hire *anyone* because I might accidentally be hiring a grasshopper—unless in job interviews, I started asking nosey questions like, "How much money do you have in the bank? Do you have an RRSP and, if so, what kind?" The interviewee would be in the right to refuse to answer such personal questions. When I had a day-job and got paid at the end of the week, it was none of my boss's business what I did with that money. And what would be wrong with hiring a grasshopper anyway? The grasshopper probably needs the money, while the ant can survive until she finds work elsewhere. If all employers thought

like you, then all those financially-unwise-but-willing-to-work grasshoppers would be forced onto welfare. How is that a good thing?

As for how prostitution "wears them out prematurely"—I don't know what you're talking about (stress?) but I'd be willing to bet it's another generalization—true for some, not true for others

I don't advocate being a john? Says who? Well, maybe I don't. I tend to think one should try as much as possible to live one's life honestly and openly, and that keeping large, important chunks of one's life secret is not psychologically good for people. It alienates you from those around you. I've been open about this with my friends and close family from day one. Anyone who would have to keep their whoring a secret shouldn't be a john, and that's probably most of the male readership of *Cerebus*. (It's also most of the john population, but that's their business.) Still, Dave, as you say, it does work for me and I'm sure it could for some others

I believe there's a world of difference between, on the one hand, running a shoe factory and, on the other hand, reinforcing for a young girl that treating her private sexuality as a marketable commodity—and participating in that market—is "okay". However, I also believe that everyone makes their own individual call on what behaviours they intend to bring before God on Judgment Day.

I resisted the urge to point out how your statistic about women over forty can't be true for Canadian and American women, but here your "careless" use of language is forcing me to insert a word-beyond-the last-word.

I'm sure that in using the words "young girls" you didn't mean to imply that any of the prostitutes I've seen have actually been children, but your readers may not know what you meant and may take those words at face value. So, for the sake of clarity: *All* of the women I've paid for sex have been *above* the legal age of consent for commercial sex in Canada, which is 18.

Since I've already begun to respond to the above, I might as well continue.

A person's sexuality is made up of the bundle of mental associations they have on the subject of sex—what they think about it, the emotions it stirs up in them, how they experience it. This all happens inwardly and can't be commodified. The closest that a person could come to commodifying their sexuality would be to write an essay or book about it or to give a lecture on it. The john isn't interested in hearing a lecture, or at least he's not interested in hearing one when he hires a prostitute. He's buying the use of the prostitute's body and that's the same thing that the shoe factory owner is buying from the worker, although, obviously, the shoe factory owner is putting the body to a different use. While I'm arguing that sexuality itself can't be commodified, that doesn't mean that selling one's body for sexual use won't *affect* the prostitute's sexuality (just as working in a shoe factory for years will affect a person). You, no doubt, think that the effect on the prostitute will always be negative. I don't see why that would necessarily be the case—not if a prostitute believes (as I do) that she's contributing something valuable to society and receives positive reinforcement in some social form—perhaps from other prostitutes, or perhaps from respectful and considerate johns.

To change my mind on this you'd have to put forward a convincing argument that fornication is a sin. Not that you need to do that right now—I know that you're anxious to move on since none of this has anything to do with Louis Riel or schizophrenia.

I see your situation with prostitution as comparable to my own situation of going out to "university-age" clubs and ogling young girls (of legal age, but for a 47-year-old-man, still young girls) which I haven't done for six months now. It was completely legal, but entirely wrong. It wasn't a matter of my having to come up with a convincing argument as to why I shouldn't do it so that I would stop doing it. I just had to stop doing it. I knew it was wrong. I miss it a lot. It was the second major death in my physical life, the first being fornication. An unhappy death, but a necessary one, in my view. Put another way, I would never be able to persuade my dick *that fornication or going to "university-age" clubs was wrong but every part of me* besides *my dick knew that to be true. The happy side-effect was I haven't had a drink since then. What's the point of having four beers if you can't look at gorgeous nineteen- and twenty-year-old girls?*

To get back to my remark about alienation not being psychologically good for people—maybe I'm wrong about that—you're the most alienated, isolated person I know and you seem (I hesitate to use the medical metaphor, but I will anyway) very psychologically "healthy". You're also (as far as I can tell) honest and open, so maybe that's important regardless of whether it alienates you or not.

Having any dealings with my society strikes me about the same way as "john school" strikes you. As long as I don't have to talk to bigoted feminists (pardon the redundancy) I'm happy as a clam

"Visceral reaction." I'm wondering whether our disgust with vomit is "natural". I've heard enough anecdotes from various sources about babies playing with and happily eating shit that it seems clear to me that our disgust with excrement isn't inborn—it's a learned behaviour. I have heard *no* similar stories about babies and vomit, but if I'm right about excrement-disgust being learned, then the same might be true of vomit-disgust.

The lunatic extremes of feminism. You're only a step away from advocating "vomit-friendly" behaviour modification

I'll end this answer on an area of agreement. I think you're probably right about immoral masturbation fantasies having real and negative consequences for one's soul. If that's true, no doubt it's the same for immoral non-sexual thoughts and fantasies, too. These days, I don't have much trouble keeping my sexual fantasies moral—at least by my standards of morality. (About 100% of my sexual fantasies feature prostitution—either specific prostitutes I've been with or, if I'm looking at a photo of, say, a *Playboy* playmate, I'll imagine her as a prostitute. Since I don't see prostitution as immoral, I don't see these fantasies as wrong. You might disagree.) What I have more difficulty with is immoral *non*-sexual fantasies. Too frequently for my liking, I'll be reading some news story and will get

angry about what some politician is doing and a fantasy about strangling the guy or perhaps breaking his legs will pop into my head. I'm trying to control this anger-impulse, but without a lot of success

You and Joseph. I still remember that grisly walk down through Kensington Market in the fall of '01 and him going on about all of the things he imagined doing to the 9-11 hijackers. It's your squishy, non-violent upbringings, I decided. Imagining what you would do to hurt dead people or politicians you'll never meet is really, really strange to me. I'm an old-fashioned kind of a guy. In the "Jet Fuel" café, I have my back to the wall and I have a good idea of which guys I consider potential trouble and what I would do about it—whether it would be better to grab the heavy ashtray or take a chance of just using my fists. But, that's just "awareness residue" from the less-than-classy bars I used to hang around in. I don't fantasize *violence outside of a public venue, but I do keep myself prepared for it*

Okay, back in the land of schizophrenia, on my latest re-reading of "My Mom was a Schizophrenic" I was drawn to your observation that delusions and hallucinations are central to the psychiatric definition of schizophrenia and, as you aptly put it, this touches on belief in a major way. In your notes you discuss a hypothetical person who talks to someone else no one else can see or hear. "You or I may think that X is deluded, but that doesn't make it any less a belief of X's." I would add that it doesn't mean that that person is illusory.

At the time, I *wanted* to add that to my sentence about X's delusion—but two things kept me from getting into the possibility that psychotic delusions and hallucinations might, in some sense, be "real": 1) Space considerations—I wanted to keep the total length of the piece (strip and notes) to eight pages, 2) I wanted the strip to be taken seriously and I knew that most readers would automatically dismiss what I was saying if I brought up the spiritual implications of the anti-psychiatric position. Szasz and Laing sounded kooky enough without bringing my religious speculations into the mix

I don't know if you've heard about Scott Schutzman, a.k.a. "Professor Starson" whose case was recently heard by the Supreme Court of Canada. Years ago—with little academic training—he, evidently, published research in physics that was hailed by some scholars as 10 years ahead of its time. He's also been diagnosed as having bipolar disorder—he believes he talks with extraterrestrials, that the Pope works for him; that he is a world champion arm wrestler and skier. In 1998, he was found not criminally responsible by reason of insanity of uttering death threats to two tenants in his apartment building. He wound up at the maximum security Oak Ridge Division of Penetanguishene Mental Health Centre where he refused medication. That was the essence of the case the Supreme Court heard: could such an individual be forced to take his meds against his will? The Supreme Court decided that he couldn't, which seemed sensible to me. I would think that that would undermine his insanity defense, though. If you aren't capable of discerning that uttering death threats is wrong, then someone else is going to have to decide what to do with you. If you are capable of discerning that uttering death threats is wrong and you utter death threats, then you have to take the rap. Which I suspect is to undergo psychiatric evaluation, and the whole process becomes a snake eating its tail. When one psychiatrist asked if he had mental problems, Starson replied, "I have no opinions. You are a religion. I have the perfect scientific mind. Only you people say I have an illness." Which is an interesting way of phrasing it. I would assume that what he means is that he doesn't believe in opinions, he believes in facts and takes it as a scientific given that what the psychiatrists believe to be his opinions are actually indisputable facts and that psychiatry is based on non-demonstrable "facts" which are actually opinions. Therefore psychiatry is more of a religion than a science, which I would agree with.

It seems to me that the way to deal with him is to find a competent amateur arm wrestler and a competent amateur skier and have them compete with him. If they can beat him then he obviously doesn't have the perfect scientific mind because he perceives his own physical state inaccurately. Start there and work from the physical to the mental.

When it comes to deciding whether or not the Pope works for him, it would be easy enough to find out what the Pope's itinerary is from the Vatican website and then ask the professor to have the Pope do something. Maybe not a handstand, but something that would make the papers. Try to narrow down the extent to which he thinks he controls the Pope and to cite examples of what he has had the Pope do in the past and why. I would maintain that that's as far as you can go, because the next step is into the realm of the spirit, when it comes to talking to extraterrestrials. There is no way to prove, pro or con, whether someone talks to (or more to the point, communicates with) extraterrestrials. To disprove it, you would either have to first disprove the existence of extraterrestrials or find some extraterrestrials and force them to admit in a court of law and under oath that they aren't talking to Professor Starson.

I heard about Starson on CBC Radio, but they didn't go into the story in as much detail as you give above. If the legal issue before the Supreme Court was whether he could be forced to take his "medicine," I'm not sure why that should undermine his insanity defence. Knowing that you don't want to be forced to take certain unpleasant drugs is a separate issue from knowing that uttering death-threats is wrong. (If it is wrong. I would think it would depend on the nature and circumstances of the threat)

Speaking from outside feminist society, I agree with you. But feminists tend to have "zero tolerance" for any sort of death threat. Probably because everyone, at one level or another, wants to kill hard-core feminists.

I wonder how much effort, in cases like Starson's is put into trying to determine if the accused knew what he was doing, or knew that what he was doing was commonly believed to be wrong? Do they just assume that if you think you communicate with extraterrestrials that you can't tell right from wrong?

I've learned to settle for: the feminists' game, the feminists' rules. Don't even joke *about killing someone unless you want to go to "john school" (at the very*

least). Sorry, I interrupted just when you were leading up to something

Before I return to that, I'll just clarify what john school is—it's a program run by the City of Toronto. There are similar ones in several American cities. Arrested johns who are first-time offenders are given a choice: the criminal justice system (with the possibility of a criminal record and jail time or a fine) or john school—a one day "re-education" session in which the students learn about the evils of the oldest profession from cops and ex-prostitutes. The john has to pay a $400 "tuition" to attend, but graduation means they have no criminal record.

I hope I haven't ruined the term's potential as a running gag.

Now, where was I? Extraterrestrials—

I saw a documentary several years ago about people who had auditory "hallucinations". The film-maker managed to find several people who "heard voices" on a regular basis and who, not wanting to seem crazy, simply ignored them and went about their daily lives They had jobs and relationships and were to all appearances "normal," contributing members of society. Most of these people kept their "hallucinations" secret from most of their acquaintances, reasoning that the higher the number of people who knew about the "voices," the higher the risk of institutionalization. These people apparently knew right from wrong, at least to the degree that none of them had had any trouble with the criminal-justice system. And these people had avoided the "mental health" system—again, because they wanted to avoid institutionalization—so none of them was taking any kind of "medication" for this. I think there were about six or seven of these people in the film. The director believed that there are a lot more of these high-functioning psychotics around, living their lives quietly, not talking about the voices they hear

I remember back when 186 came out and everyone was joining the Dave Sim lynch mob and I heard indirectly about Rick Veitch saying, "Well, he's already admitted that he hears voices in his head." You know· the "if you're not a feminist you're a psycho" argument I thought everyone *heard voices in their head. You know. Thought? What does Rick Veitch hear in* his *head? "Mmm. Sandwich." "Mmmm. Sleep." This seems to me the most pernicious quality of universal feminization: "You think too much." Homer Simpson as societal engineering template.*

Anyway, back to Starson and the insanity defence—one can be deemed not responsible for a criminal act by reason of insanity if one didn't understand the consequences of that act or if one didn't know that that act was wrong. It seems to me that getting Starson to compete with an amateur skier or having him command the Pope to do a handstand are beside the points, as far as Canadian law goes. At least in theory—again, I don't know how it works in practice.

From what I can see it's the feminist snake eating its tail—from the feminist courtroom to the feminist shrink's couch and back again. I should've specified that my suggestions were for the shrink's couch part of the show. The best therapy would be to demonstrate to him that his demonstrable *delusions—like being a professional skier—are just that.*

Your speculations about the Starson quote that begins, "I have no opinions," sound possible, but I found myself wondering about the context of his words. Was the question that preceded the quote something like, "Do you have any opinions on whether you have a mental illness?" If that was the case, then Starson might have meant, "I have no opinions that you'd take seriously, because you think I'm crazy."

You agree with his "You are a religion" line and I almost do. I actually think that the religion is scientific-materialism and that the mental "health" system is scientific-materialism's Holy Inquisition.

By the way, even if some extraterrestrials admitted under oath in a court of law that they've never communicated with Starson, that wouldn't mean that there aren't some *other* extraterrestrials who've been chatting with the professor.

If so, we should send them all *to "john school". (no discernible damage to .its "running gag" potential) Give me your best definition of scientific-materialism*

My *Webster's* defines materialism as

1. the doctrine that everything in the world, including thought, can be explained only in terms of matter

2. the tendency to be more concerned with material than with spiritual or intellectual values.

I'm thinking of the first definition which is almost always interpreted in an atheistic way—there are no spirits, there is no God, no afterlife. There are probably a few people who believe that God and an afterlife can be accounted for in a materialistic manner, but as far as I understand it, that's not what's generally meant by materialism. I came across the term scientific-materialism in some large overview of western philosophy a few years ago and assumed that it was widely used, at least by philosophers. I've become aware that it isn't, but I still like it because if you just say "materialism" most people think you mean the second of the above dictionary definitions, and science is closely tied to the popularity of materialism. Scientific theories and experiments almost always start with a materialistic assumption, so a lot of people assume that science has proven the materialistic viewpoint.

Psychology being one of the notable exceptions to the "materialistic assumption," as I discovered in reading the seminal writings of Freud and Jung for Latter Days. *When it comes to psychology being a system of belief unsupported by relevant evidence, you could have as easily used Freud and Jung as Kraepelin and Bleuler in "My Mom was a Schizophrenic". The fact that Freud is almost universally discredited in the field he created, to me, reinforces that this is delusional pseudo-science. Genuine science builds on the work of its seminal pioneers—Newton's laws of motion in Physics, as an example: it's only at the extremes of physical reality (the speed of light, sub-atomic particles, etc.) that Newton's laws develop little quirks. But the science itself is still solid. Psychology, on the other hand, seems to me to be, structurally and implicitly,*

little more than "amoral morality" and therefore a certifiable oxymoron, a belief system for unbelievers. Freud's "id"—it occurred to me in reading him—is actually an amoral or "extra-moral" (in the sense of existing outside of conceptions of morality) way of describing evil. His "super-ego" is an amoral way or "extra-moral" way of describing goodness.

Since we're running out of space here in our "schizo installment," I'm just going to say, flat out, that the conclusion that I've come to is that the foundational dichotomy in our world is between adherence to God on the one hand and adherence to anything else besides God on the other This seems to me to be the brilliant ethical underpinning of Islam—submission to the will of God—as a conscious, free-will choice. An on-going *conscious, free-will choice which, in my experience, only reaches fruition when it is renewed daily. Five times daily, through prayer I can only go by my own experience, but everything works better when you adhere to God*

The R D. Laing quote that concludes your strip is one of the interesting quirks of psychology. That, even when it is critiquing itself, it does so with its own vague terminology—"repression, denial, splitting, projection, introjection" as if any of those terms have an acceptable universally agreed-upon meaning in the way that "an object" and "motion" and "at rest" have agreed upon meanings in Physics As you've pointed out yourself, even with your own anti-psychiatry stance, you are at a loss for a way to dissent from the view that Dave Sim is insane without falling back on the terminology that I seem mentally "healthy" to you

I think the "psychedelic state" you refer to in the strip is enticing to God's adversary, since an "otherworldly state" implies that there might exist psychological and spiritual "dimensions" where the absolutes of good and evil don't hold true, or where shades of gray exist or where good is actually evil and evil is actually good. Whereas I believe that there is only good—submission to the will of God—and evil—anything else

Before I get too far afield, would you agree that there is a fundamental breakdown, a schism, an inherent schizophrenia implied by scientific materialism's attempt to make a pseudo-science like psychology "perform" or "fill a societal role" as if it were a demonstrable, verifiable science like Physics? I don't want to be accused of manufacturing an agreement between us here that doesn't exist

I wouldn't use the word "schizophrenia" there—I'm more comfortable applying the word to individuals than to ideas or institutions But there is certainly a divide—a schism—between genuine science and the pseudo-scientific mental "health" industry. (I tend to focus more on psychiatry than on other branches of the industry—psychiatrists have more power and are therefore more dangerous than other kinds of mental "health" "therapists" but I agree that Freud and Jung weren't scientists. Or, if they were, then they weren't *good* scientists—they didn't follow the scientific method.) The schism reminds me of the one that existed between Christ's words and the actions of the Church's Inquisition.

Jumping back to your comments about the will of God—the difficulty is figuring out what the will of God is. Even if two people can agree on which book or books represent "the word of God," their interpretations will differ

That's the reason that Islam specifically calls it submission *to the will of God. It presupposes—rightly I think—God's omnipresence and omnipotence which dwarf those of human beings. Basically you don't "figure out" the will of God, you submit to it Human beings can't figure out the will of God because we are structurally too simplistic. To attempt to "figure out" the will of God in your life is to break a fundamental tenet of Islam: joining gods with God. If you think you and God together are going to figure out what you're going to do in your life, you are elevating yourself way above your human status and dooming the enterprise to failure at the outset. Praying five times a day signals to God that you're letting go of the steering wheel He'll let you know what you need to do and He'll make it as painless as possible. As long as you don't try grabbing the steering wheel again which is a standard "rookie" mistake*

I'm interested in what you wrote about God's adversary finding the psychedelic mental-state enticing, but I'm not sure I understood it. Are you saying that if someone enjoys doing LSD, the source of the attraction is being in a mental-state where absolutes of good and evil don't hold true, or are you applying that only to God's adversary—presumably the being you call Yoohwhoo. If the latter, how do you mean that? Yoohwhoo herself enjoys the psychedelic experience? Yoohwhoo wants people to have psychedelic experiences?

Absolutes of good and evil hold true everywhere, in my view. YHWH, remember, as far back as Genesis 8:21, came to the conclusion that "the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth," so anything which leads man in evil directions supports her thesis. The topsy-turvy nature of the LSD trip certainly held a lot of promise. "Turn on, tune in, drop out," as a diametric opposite of submission to the will of God must've seemed a fruitful avenue to YHWH back in the 50s when LSD was being tested. The fact that a strait-laced good, conventional Harvard citizen like Tim Leary could be transformed into...well...what Tim Leary was transformed into must've seemed to YHWH to promise that Armageddon was just over the horizon

Your implication—as I read it—in "My Mom was a Schizophrenic" that the psychedelic state is a natural one that we should be choosing to pursue and encouraging others to pursue as individuals would, I think, appeal enormously to YHWH As long as the answer isn't submission to the will of God, I'm pretty sure YHWH is in favour of it.

Bringing this back to Louis Riel, *I thought that Dr Francois Roy's testimony in issue ten on megalomania the precursor of dementia praecox, itself the precursor of schizophrenia, was interesting: "They sometimes give you reasons which would be reasonable if they were not starting from a false idea. They have a tendency to irritability when you question or doubt their mental condition, because they are under a strong impression that they are right and they consider it to be an insult when you try to bring them to reason again On ordinary questions they may be reasonable and sometimes may be very clever In fact, without careful watching they would lead one to think that they were*

well." This neatly sums up my reaction to feminism. I think it worth noting that in our discussion this far, in any area that touches on gender, you have leapt to what would have to be viewed as a female YHWHist viewpoint. Doubting, as an example, the assertion that a woman over forty has a greater likelihood of being kidnapped by terrorists than she has of getting married. Even though, at some level, you know that that's true. How many forty-year-old hookers have you been with? And then to discuss a hypothetical seventy-year-old woman taking a lover as if that was some sort of a commonplace occurrence.

Having submitted myself to the will of God I just get accustomed to these sorts of ninety-degree turns into areas which have no foundation in reality. In another age, it would've been seen as demonic possession, which is still how I tend to see feminism. You can be having a sensible discussion with someone about something and then they'll suddenly start talking about seventy-year-old women having lovers. At that point I'm not talking to Chet, I'm talking to YHWH. I don't mean to single you out, by the way, it happens with everyone I talk to on those rare occasions when I talk to people.

In my own case, I got hit with a YHWH hammer back in 1979 as a result of doing too much acid, so I know how partial she is to the drug. One of the first things I did after getting "hit" was to make up a petition asking Jackie Onassis to declare herself President of the United States—that the presidency should have passed to her instead of Lyndon Johnson on November 22, 1963. It took a few days for the YHWH blast to wear off sufficiently for me to go, "That's crazy." I kept the petition around for years to remind myself of what I was dealing with here.

I think it worth noting, as well, that—although we started off this dialogue going like gangbusters with you responding to each of my faxes the same day or, occasionally, the next day, your last two responses have come in eight days and ten days later. Early in part one, you informed me that you were going to visit your brother in Quebec City for a few days and, consequently, wouldn't be responding for that period. In our most recent exchange, when it became obvious that this issue of Cerebus *was in danger of being late because of your slow response time, I had to phone Peter at the Beguiling to find out that you had left for a week to premiere the book out west, no notification. You did send a response when I finally tracked you to your hotel in Regina and I sent a follow-up. This is now the pattern: I send you a response immediately and you take several days to respond. This, it seems to me, follows along with Dr. Roy's observation on megalomania/dementia praecox/schizophrenia. Being anti-psychiatry like yourself I don't think there's a need to find pseudo-scientific terms for it. I think it's enough to just call it what it is: evasiveness and foot-dragging. We're not trying to convince each other of our respective viewpoints. As in my dialogue with Alan Moore, all we're doing—or, at least, all we were doing—is enunciating our differences. But, I think it worth noting that it is always your team (which, for the sake of convenience and, I think, with accuracy can be lumped under the heading of "feminist") which becomes evasive and begins to drag its feet. I don't think it's a conscious reaction (at least I hope it isn't), but it is pretty much universal and was something that I anticipated when we started this dialogue (it is, in my experience, something of a feministic inevitability) although certainly not to the severe extent that you're exhibiting. It is a kindred nature to everyone's immediate response to exile Dave Sim from polite company in response to 186 and "Tangent" and the Fourteen Impossible Things to Believe Before Breakfast That Make You a Good Feminist. Do you understand? I'm not trying to be unkind here. Really I'm not. But isn't it worth a little self-examination as to why your first response as a feminist is to exile any individual who exhibits non-feminist thinking, to refuse to respond to his specific reasoned arguments (the Impossible Things to Believe Before Breakfast) and to become evasive and drag your feet when all I'm asking is that you enunciate your own viewpoints on the inability/unwillingness to perceive accurately the distinction between reality and fantasy?*

Your evidence that the psychedelic experience "leads man in evil directions" is that psychedelic drugs transformed Tim Leary "into...well...what Tim Leary was transformed into" and that LSD made you think that Jackie Onassis should be the President of the United States.

Your hesitation to describe Leary's transformation is revealing. Despite apparently thinking that he'd gone in an "evil direction," you couldn't say that he became evil. He said things you disagreed with, he did things you wouldn't do (now), but he didn't kill anyone, he didn't rape anyone—he became an outlaw, not because he stole anything, but because he was in possession of a small amount of pot. He changed, but the person he turned into doesn't seem to have been all that terrible to me. And the sudden celebrity status played a role in that change—it wasn't just the drugs.

Jackie Onassis for President—presumably the problem you're complaining about is that LSD impedes one's ability to think clearly. If that was all psychedelics did, they'd be worthless. But there's also a mystical aspect to the experience that feels important. That's right, I said *feels* important. I tend to think that people place way too much importance on their emotions and let feelings guide their actions to a ridiculous degree. But I don't think that people should ignore their emotions altogether and I think there can be value in a powerful emotional experience. Also, psychedelic experiences don't always involve diminished intellectual powers. In his book *DMT: The Spirit Molecule,* Rick Strassman reports that that particular—very strong—psychedelic drug "had surprisingly little effect on volunteers' ability to think and reason." He quotes one of those volunteers—"My intellect wasn't altered at all. I was just alert to what was unfolding during the experience." (p.148). None of the DMT-users interviewed in the book expressed Jackie-Onassis-should-be-President kind of thoughts during or after their experiences. They were "crazy" only to the extent that they believed that their DMT-induced encounters with alien intelligences were real (although they were aware that others couldn't see the alien beings)

"[T]he psychedelic state is a natural one that we should be choosing to pursue and encouraging others to pursue." You're thinking of the R. D. Laing quote, right? Where he says that schizophrenia can "heal" our "appalling state of alienation called normality." Since I make it clear that I think that the schizophrenic experience is an accidentally-achieved psychedelic

experience, it's not unreasonable of you to infer that I'm saying that psychedelic drugs are worth doing. I did LSD twice and found it a fascinating but generally unpleasant experience. Despite the unpleasantness, I don't regret doing it, and if someone wanted to take the drug I wouldn't try to dissuade them. But, to keep things in perspective, I've learned more useful information by reading the books of Colin Wilson than I did from my psychedelic experiences.

[A] woman over forty has a greater likelihood of being kidnapped by terrorists than she has of getting married." I've personally known four women over the age of forty who've gotten married and *no one*, male or female, under forty or over forty, who's been kidnapped by terrorists. If I hung out with older people, my hunch is that I'd know more women who got married after forty and that I still wouldn't know anyone who'd been kidnapped by terrorists. I am 100% positive that in Canada and the United States, the number of women who've gotten married over the age of forty is greater than the number of women over forty who've been kidnapped by terrorists. That might not be the case in politically unstable countries with a lot of terrorism and where it's more difficult to get divorced and where it's socially frowned upon for widows to remarry. But so what? We were talking about whether women could use their "bait" after forty and that means we should be talking about societies (like our own) where older women are *allowed* to use their bait, not societies where women are *prevented* from using their bait. Who do you think older men are marrying? Most widowers in their sixties who want to re-marry aren't finding twenty-year-olds to stand at the altar with—maybe a sixty-year-old widower would like it if he could attract a twenty-year-old, but, unless he has a lot of money, that's probably not going to happen. So widowers in their fifties and sixties look for women in their forties or fifties.

As for a seventy-year-old woman being able get a man, my paternal grandmother got re-married when she was 78. I'm convinced that, no matter what her age, any woman who's reasonably healthy and has her wits about her can snag a fella, as long as she has the will to get out there and look. There are lots of lonely older guys out there who want the companionship. There is no cut-off age for this sort of thing.

How many forty-year old hookers have I been with? None. But I've certainly seen women in their forties who, if they'd been prostitutes, I'd have gladly paid for sex. When I was in my twenties, women over thirty did nothing for me. In my early thirties, I was surprised to find that some women in their thirties were looking good to me. Now that I'm in my forties, I'm starting to notice attractive women in their forties. Joe recently repeated something to me that his father said—"I never thought this would happen but, at my age, they *all* look good." Well, I'm far from thinking that *all* women in their forties look good—there are more women in their twenties who look good to me than women in their forties. Which is why I don't see prostitutes who are in their forties. Because I'm not seeing streetwalkers, I can't look at the women beforehand. I know that my chances of being happy with how a prostitute looks are statistically higher if I phone one who's in her twenties than if I phone one who's in her forties. But I'm sure there are forty-year-old hookers out there who I'd be happy with. An acquaintance of mine who's also a john tells me that he specifically seeks out older prostitutes because "they know what they're doing."

Also guys see prostitutes for one thing only—sex. When they're looking for someone to get married to, they're still thinking about sex, but they're also thinking beyond sex. Something called "personality" does enter the picture. Women can use more than sex-appeal as relationship bait. And with older guys, other factors can come into play. If the guy is raising kids, he's probably thinking in terms of someone who's good with children, for example.

I'm not evading your questions. You're sending me questions, I'm sending you back answers. If you think I haven't fully answered something, feel free to call me on it or to re-phrase the question. The main issue is, at my rate of response, will the third part of this dialogue be ready for *Cerebus* #297? It might not be, so why not put the Aardvark Comment that's scheduled to go in #298 (I seem to remember you saying you already had the letters) in #297 instead and put the third part of this dialogue in #298? You're saved the worry of wondering whether that fucking feminist Chester Brown will delay #297, and I don't have to rearrange my life around "Getting *Riel*."

I'm not exiling you. My respect for your work in on the record (*The Little Man*, p.165) and I'm always delighted to see you when you're in town. I'm being sincere. If you want my response to the Impossible Things to Believe Before Breakfast, I'd be willing to give it. Just remind me which issue it's in.

And I apologize for any frustration my slowness has caused you.

I'm not frustrated. In psychology that's called "projection"—seeing your own traits in others who don't possess them (usually the therapist). I don't think of you as a "fucking feminist," but I do see you as a feminist and I was pointing out that one of the traits of a feminist is evasiveness and foot-dragging. I was commenting on the length of time between answers, not on the fullness of your answers which I have no complaint with. When you phoned after getting my "I think it worth noting..." supplement you said that it was taking you longer to answer because your answers were longer. I pointed out that going from a daily response to once-every-nine-days hasn't translated into answers that are nine times as long. That's what I mean by evasiveness. You were evading answering and then evaded admitting that you were being evasive. I'm also not asking you to rearrange your life around this dialogue. That's also evasive. I asked you what your schedule looked like to get this part done this week and you said all you had scheduled was dinner with Sook-Yin.

The quote about women over forty I read quoted—twice—earlier this year by female columnists, but I can't remember which ones. I don't know when your 78-year-old paternal grandmother remarried or when your female acquaintances/friends over forty got married, but I suspect that both instances are becoming less frequent occurrences as the definitions of marriage (in terms of alimony and child support responsibilities) are being expanded. That is, I suspect that the "kidnapped by terrorists" bit was probably intentionally overstated in the original article as an expression of frustration on the part of a lot of women who decided "career first" and are finding—here, now, in 2003, not 1985 or 1991—that their "marketability" had dropped

dramatically by the time they fouhd themselves fully established in their career. There's a lot of anguishing about this stuff among the female columnists that I read (speaking as a compulsive reader). One of them pointed out that the men their age that they are most interested in are not going to be interested in them—that is, if he's still enough of a "catch" in his forties, he isn't going to settle for someone his own age. Which leaves these over-achiever women—who have never settled for anything but the best—with the choice of...and here she listed a few stereotypical loser types among men in their forties and fifties. I suspect that condition is worsening rapidly from where forty+ year-old women sit, which is why it is recurring so often in their journalism.

*The core of my thesis isn't that LSD made me think that Jackie Onassis should be President. The core of my thesis is that there is submission to the will of God and all else is basically YHWH: extraterrestrials, mystical events, paranormal experiences, the—as you point out—incredibly widespread incidence of people hearing voices in their heads—pagan "gods" and "goddesses," Timothy Leary declaring—as he did in the last year of his life—that he thought Yoko Ono was the greatest human being who had ever lived. That's not just skewed thinking (in any rational sense of the term) but singularly female-centered thinking. The conclusion I've come to is that YHWH takes whatever form he/she/and or it chooses in order to tempt people away from God. Whether it's UFOs, Allen Ginsberg hearing "the voice of [William] Blake, speaking to him through eternity" or "It" appearing "in vivid fire with shining colors and balanced patterns," as "It" did with Philip K. Dick, it's all one being in my view, whose only motivation, at essence, is "anyone or anything but God." From my own experience and from those I've read about, the central reality with YHWH is that he/she/it basically just hits you with a fire-based or (in my case) energy-based ker-WHOMP and then leaves you to make of it what you will (being reasonably certain that whatever you make of it, the greater likelihood is that the ker-WHOMP will turn you away from God and therefore you will become, in effect, one of his/her/its emissaries/followers. That is, I don't think it matters to he/she/it in the least what it is that you end up attributing your experience to as long as it's something besides God. His/her and/or its success rate in that regard, from what I can see, is pretty close to 100%. I'm the only one that I know of who got ker-WHOMPed who has ended up choosing God over the panoply of choices on the YHWH smorgasbord). He/she/it seems to be shifting gears at the present moment. Evidently, there are several television programs debuting this fall which are about God communicating directly with teenagers (*Joan of Arcadia, Tru Calling *and* Wonderfalls*). On the surface of it, a nice step back in the direction of good instead of evil. But I don't think God communicates directly in that way. In fact, I think God is pretty scrupulous about keeping His communications non-verbal. If you knowingly submit to His will, you will get led into much better directions. But, if you have an outside voice in your head and it tells you that it's God, it seems to me that the odds are much better that its YHWH pretending to be God as he/she/it has been wont to do. My best advice would be to ask the voice if the voice is the Elohim (God) of Genesis 1 or YHWH Elohim of most of the rest of the Torah (and don't accept "I am"—the Exodus "burning bush" evasion). If the latter, then tell he/she/it nicely, in the Name of God, to go away. God! Accept no substitutes! Three television programs is more than a bit excessive, but I think YHWH realizes that the jig is up and he/she/it is lighting off every firework ready to hand in the hopes that something will starting turning his/her/its way again. Most unlikely, I think. His/her and/or its delusions that he/she and/or it is God are proving to be just as insubstantial as the underpinnings of all forms of feminism.*

Why is it taking me longer to write these replies besides the fact that most of them are longer? My work-load was lighter when I began "Getting *Riel*" and it's heavier now. Saying that I only had to have dinner with Sook-Yin wasn't meant to indicate that I didn't have any non-"Getting *Riel*" work to do. It meant that I was willing to put aside that work for several days to work exclusively on "Getting *Riel*". The only thing I wasn't willing to set aside was that dinner with Sook-Yin. Taking into consideration my work-load for the coming month, spending as much time now on "Getting *Riel*" as I did when I began it would mean rearranging my life around this dialogue.

Sorry, Chet. I misunderstood. This isn't work or writing per se *to me after the marathon essays "Islam, My Islam" and "Why Canada Slept". For me, "Getting Riel" makes a nice typing break in the midst of finishing* Cerebus.

Things like alimony and child support concerns *should* be scaring men away from marriage. You and I have dropped out of the game—I'm sure other men are doing the same. I still have a hard time seeing this "dropping out" becoming really wide-spread. The eternal-love ideal seems too firmly ingrained in our culture. But things have to change in some way. Marriage's current incarnation looks too unstable to be workable in the long run.

"Eternal-love" being more of a female priority, I don't think we, as men, would know how widespread the "dropping out" is becoming. The semi-hysterical edge to female journalism 2002-03 indicates to me that it is becoming exponentially more wide-spread in the last few months.

Your comments on YHWH and extraterrestrials, mystical events, etc. make clear your reaction to Emmanuel Swedenborg (as expressed in personal conversations). From your perspective, Swedenborg had to have been caught up in a YHWH experience. While I greatly enjoyed reading "Chasing YHWH," I didn't accept it as truth, so I don't see any need to dismiss anyone's mystical or paranormal experiences as YHWH-inspired. Life—every aspect of it—is a strange, bizarre experience. You might as well tell me that eating food is one of YHWH's ways of keeping us distracted from God.

Next issue: Why I see eating food as one of YHWH's ways of keeping us distracted from God, Chet's discovery of Emmanuel Swedenborg's Church of New Jerusalem *and more in the concluding installment of "Getting Riel".*

SHORT LIST
THE THIRD ANNUAL
HOWARD EUGENE DAY
MEMORIAL PRIZE

The Short List has been selected by Dave Sim from those works submitted for consideration by the exhibitors at the 4th Annual Small Press & Alternative Comics Expo (SPACE) in Columbus, Ohio.

The Winner of the Third Annual Day Prize will be selected by Gerhard. The prize consists of a five-hundred-dollar cash award, a commemorative plaque and an eight-page excerpt from the winning entry to appear in the January issue of ***Cerebus*** (issue 298).

The Short List nominees have all agreed to make available to anyone mentioning the Day Prize in their letter an autographed copy of their nominated work for the price (in U.S. dollars) indicated below their listing. The works are listed alphabetically, by title.

Askarihodari
third issue
Glenn Brewer
(Scott Woods, Arron Putnam, editors)
427 Oak St. Apt. #B1
Columbus, Ohio
43215
Askarihodari.com
(three dollars)

Attic Wit
fourth issue
Matt Dembicki, Rafal Gosieniecki,
Marek Turek, Mariuz Zawadzki,
Krzysztof Kaluszka
Wasp Comics
3148 Hartwick Lane
Fairfax, Va.
22031
(one dollar and fifty cents)

The Gypsy Lounge
graphic novel
Jasen Lex
Aweful Books
1309 Straka Street
Pittsburgh, PA
15204
books.com
(seventeen dollars)

Happy Town
seventh issue
Justin Madson
Just Mad Books
4016 N. 50th Street.
Sheboygan, Wisconsin
53083
mad
(three dollarss)

Possum at Large
first issue
Chad Lambert
Old School Comics
3610 Stockbridge Lane
Hamilton, Ohio
45011
(four dollars and ninety-five cents)

pop gun war
chapters 2, 4 and 5
Farel Dalrymple
P.O. Box 875,
Lincoln, California
95648
(three dollars each)

Street Angel
first issue
Dick Troutman & Brian Maruca
Aweful Books
P.O. Box 4517
Pittsburg, PA
15205
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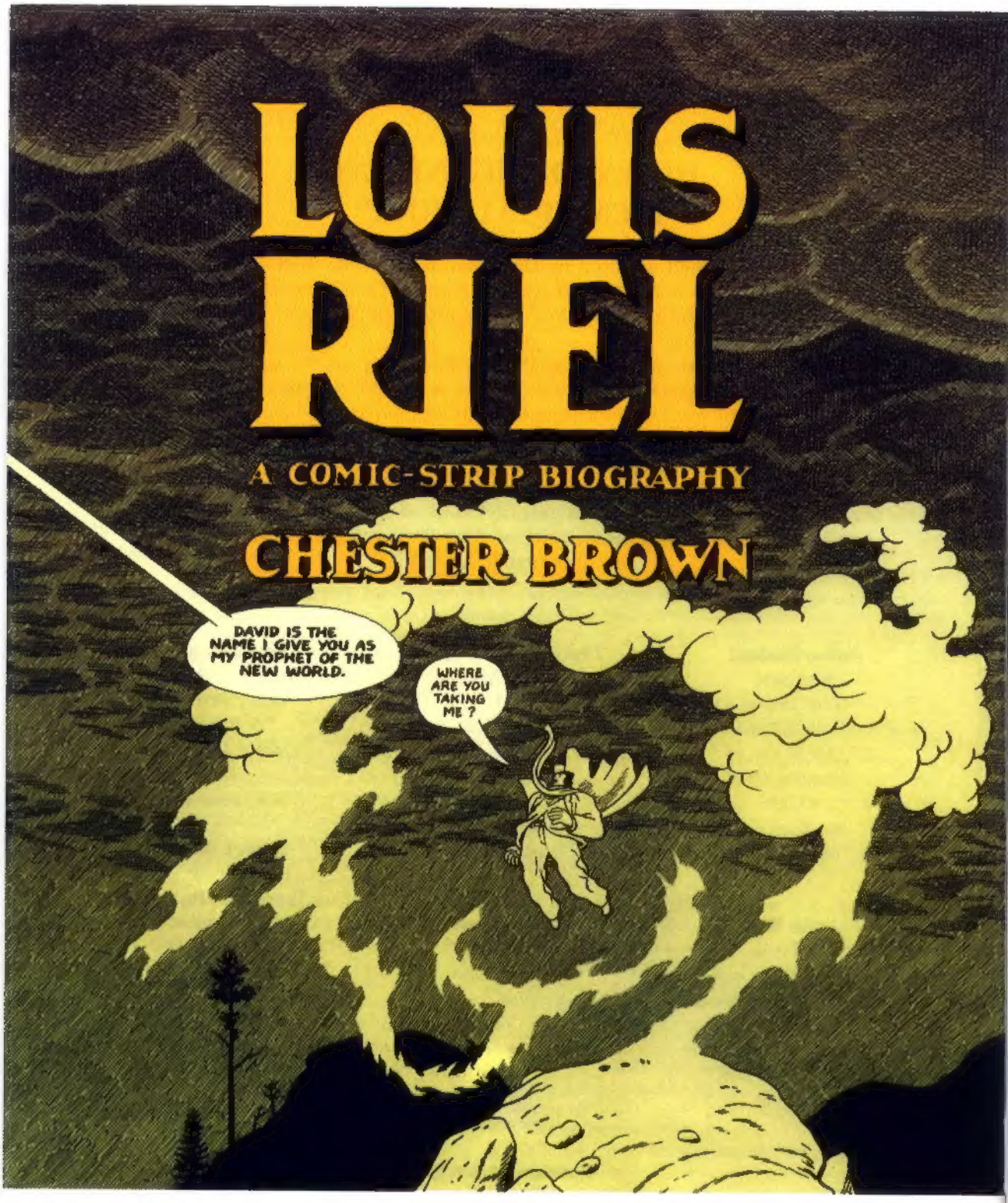
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